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NOVEMBER
1930

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FOR NOVEMBER 1930

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Vol. I

NOVEMBER, 1930

No. 9

WE read with more than usual interest Mr. Compton Mackenzie's editorial in the September number of *The Gramophone*. From it we glean that all is not well with the record business in England. For the last three or four years we have been told that broadcasting was not affecting the sale of records abroad and were led to believe that the dealers over there were such superior merchants that they were keeping up the sale of discs regardless of radio competition. We felt all along that eventually the record industry in England would feel the effect of broadcasting, and the reason it did not feel it sooner is very likely due to the fact that broadcasting over there is controlled by the government. If our Postmaster General were the czar of broadcasting—with all due respect to Mr. Brown, who, may we remark, is maintaining the postal service on an extremely high plane—we doubt very much if his programs would very greatly affect the record business. Our broadcasting is dull at times, but can you imagine anything duller than a program arranged under the auspices of the post office department?

In the course of his editorial, Mr. Mackenzie propounds a series of reasons for the decline in the sale of records. He mentions the following: "The unnecessary duplication of big

works, and for that matter the small works, too, the survival of prehistoric red-seal Celebrity records, the omission to provide the words and translations of foreign songs, the failure to publish a preliminary list of the important works to be brought out during the Spring and Autumn seasons, the neglect to reissue big works at a really popular price in the way that publishers reprint books more cheaply after a passage of time," and then suggests that, "the discouragement of the public belief that His Master's Voice speaks daily with a more and more unmistakably American twang" might be of great benefit to the record industry.

We quite agree that "unnecessary duplication of big works" is a useless waste. Certainly, if three or four manufacturers each bring out a recording of a work, there is a great likelihood that none of them will sell enough sets to make the venture a profitable one. We do not know just what is meant by "the survival of prehistoric red-seal Celebrity records," but if it means Kreisler playing *The Rosary*, when the talents of this great artist might be devoted to something really worthy of his art, we agree unequivocally. As to "the omission to provide the words and translations of foreign songs" and "the failure to publish a preliminary list of the

important works to be brought out during the Spring and Autumn seasons," we doubt very much if either of these would greatly affect record business here in America. In the first place we are so accustomed to hearing foreign songs in their native language that we would not recognize their names if we saw them printed in English, and, second, the translations of the text of the songs that we have seen have been so generally stupid that we feel that they would add nothing to the enjoyment of the record.



We can state that the practice of announcing record sets in advance of their availability would not be successful over here. In England, where they take their pleasure much more seriously and seemingly plan their purchases months in advance, it might be a real service to the collectors. Here we want what we want when we want it. "The neglect to reissue big works at a really popular price" has been considered by our American manufacturers many times. The plan has always been thought impracticable for the reason that the possible difference in price would be so small per record that it would not be sufficient to create a large enough volume of sales to warrant the procedure. Except for the initial cost of the actual recording there would be very little saved. In making records there is no such thing as cheaper bindings, less expensive paper, fewer illustrations, etc.



And now we come to the point upon which we would like a little enlightenment. We should like to know how the record business in England could be benefited by "the discouragement of the public belief that His Master's Voice speaks daily with a more and more unmistakable American twang." We take the remark to mean that if the British public could be led to believe that The Gramophone Co., Ltd., were an independent English company and not controlled by American capital, then His Majesty's subjects would rally around the flag and buy a lot more records. Perhaps they would, but we doubt it.



We are rather of the opinion that the country which produced records of *The New York Philharmonic-Symphony* under Toscanini, *The Philadelphia Orchestra* under Stokowski, the first practical phonograph, the first record capable of being played numerous times, the first cabinet phonograph with concealed horn, the electrical process of recording and the first electrical reproducing instrument, represents in the minds of people everywhere unqualified leadership in the phonograph industry. If this is true, then we fail to see how the knowledge of the fact that H.M.V. is controlled by Americans could deter the progress of that company. We understand that American films are at least "holding their own" in the English cinema houses and that occasionally a Ford car is seen on the road over there, so we really do not take Mr. Mackenzie's remarks about "American twang" very seriously. We rather feel that it has nothing in the world to do with the matter in question.



What has happened here will in large measure happen in England. When the novelty of broadcasting wears off slightly, many will return to their phonographs. They will realize that to have the tunes they like, played by their favorite dance band just when they want them, is a real advantage. Those who are interested in the best in music will find that the percentage of programs which contain

numbers interesting to them is negligible. Of course, the very large middle group, who are entirely satisfied as long as a composition has melody and do not care who the composer or performer is, will have their musical appetites adequately gratified by the radio. It is the sales to this group which have declined so greatly that they have affected the general average of the whole record business. We do not see any immediate way to recapture the interest of this group, unless it is by producing an automatic instrument at a popular price. Many in this group wish continuous music without expending the effort to change records. It is rumored that such an instrument will be available presently, but in the meantime the loss of their patronage must be made up by larger sales to the other two classes.



Sales to those who are interested in popular dance music have increased slightly due to their desire to have the tune they wish at the moment they want it. The "easy money" that our song writers and music publishers have been collecting from Hollywood is not coming so easily now. The public has had an overdose of musical (?) films. The writers are now working hard to produce hits, and the publishers are arranging to popularize them by scientific "plugging." They realize that to get a number in a mediocre film along with three or four others is not sufficient to make it a worldwide success. Instead of four or five substantial hits a year as heretofore, we have had only one real hit in nearly two years. Since *Sonny Boy* there has been nothing except *The Stein Song*, and that was an accident. Popular record business thrives largely upon hits, and without them it simply dwindles away. And let us not forget that the profits from the popular record sales made possible the issuance of the sets which have meant so much to all of us.



The really bright spot in the immediately present record picture is the fact that intelligent people are realizing more and more that a knowledge of the history and appreciation of music is quite the expected thing among those who consider themselves well educated. A record library is a necessary adjunct to this study. Schools, conservatories and individuals realize this, and many fine libraries are the result. A desire among the discerning for a fine collection of records is becoming quite common.



The industry must cater to this new and ever increasing group of buyers by issuing works that will round out our catalogues, by making the data on record labels full and accurate, by drafting the booklets, which accompany the sets, for the intelligent student rather than making them "sales talks." In designing catalogues, let us assume that they are intended largely for the musically informed and for those who are striving to gain a knowledge of the subject. Briefly, let us make the building of a record collection as easy, as pleasant, as instructive and as gratifying as possible. One interested record collector is worth more to the industry than fifty haphazard buyers. A fine record library is a source of inspiration to others, who may build one, too. The quality of reproduction afforded by the electrical process of recording and the new electrical instruments is attracting many who scorned the phonograph heretofore. American record business is increasing and the acceleration will be in direct proportion to the intelligence we use in developing the latent desire inherent in thousands to possess a library of the world's music.



The splendid recordings which we are receiving from England are helping a lot, and as long as the present sterling quality is maintained, we do not care whether

His Master's Voice speaks with a cockney dialect or an American twang. We shall be able to recognize the merit of the product in either case. Cheerio!



LAURENCE POWELL, whose "Jean Sibelius" is printed in this issue, met Sibelius in 1921 and recently dedicated his *Symphony No. 1* to the Finnish composer. Mr. Powell was born in 1899 in Birmingham, England. He studied composition under Sir Granville Bantock. In 1923 he came to this country, where he has been, successively, assistant music critic to the Boston *Transcript*, instructor in theory at the University of Wisconsin, and professor of theory at the University of Arkansas, which position he still holds. His published works include piano pieces, twenty part-songs, two cantatas, and *Halcyone*, a dramatic poem for chorus, soli and orchestra, which was performed by the British Broadcasting Corporation, January 1, 1929. Several works for symphony orchestra, among them *The Orgre of the Northern Fastness*, *Charivari* and *Keltic Legend*, have been performed in England. Mr. Powell is a frequent contributor to American, English and Canadian reviews.



NICOLA A. MONTANI, whose review of the records made by the Monks' Choir of Saint-Pierre de Solesmes Abbey appears in this issue, is editor of *The Catholic Choirmaster*, a periodical devoted to the propagation of Gregorian Chant and Ecclesiastical Music. Mr. Montani was born in Utica, New York. After preliminary studies in this country, he went to Rome, where he was associated with Don Lorenzo Perosi, the director of the Sistine Chapel Choir. He studied organ with Filippo Cappocci, then director of the choir at St. John Lateran. He spent some time at the Isle of Wight, coming in contact with Dom Mocquereau and the Solesmes Monks, who had taken up their abode there. He is the founder and conductor of the Palestrina Choir of Philadelphia and is at the head of the vocal department in the College of Mt. St. Vincent on the Hudson, New York; Georgian Court College, Lakewood, N. J.; Marywood College, Scranton, Pa.; Misericordiæ College, Dallas, Pa. In 1928 Mr. Montani was honored by Pope Pius XI, who conferred on him the Count's Cross and the distinction of Knight Commander of the Order of St. Sylvester. Mr. Montani is the editor of the Liturgical Catalogue of G. Schirmer and the Boston Music Co. His published works include many sacred and secular compositions. His best known work is the St. Gregory Hymnal, now used as a text book in most Catholic colleges and schools throughout the country.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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CODE

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer and all records are domestic releases unless the word **IMPORTED** appears directly under the number: B-Brunswick, C-Columbia, EB-Edison-Bell, FO-Fonotipia, G-National Gramophonic Society, HO-Homocord, O-Odeon, PA-Parlophon, PD-Polydor, R-Regal (English), and V-Victor.

Jean Sibelius

LAURENCE POWELL

I

Art is one type of escape from confusion; the artist is a man who has an irresistible urge to create something in which he can express his thoughts logically, to make a well ordered whole that for him and for others is a standing negation of confusion. Philosophy might be said to be an effort to see order in what appears to be confusion, to discover a meaning in life and mentally to force order into existing confusion. Sibelius is both artist and philosopher. Intellectual isolation is necessary to the development of any artistic individuality, and physical isolation is a boon seldom granted. Beethoven's deafness, however much discomfort it gave him, was certainly an asset to his art because it afforded his intellectual isolation a physical isolation. After becoming imbued with Sibelius' work, one realizes what a blessed relief the Finnish fastness affords from the banalities of the "artist colonies," "schools," "coteries," "cliques," societies for this and that, and the clack-ing critics, all of which are strong agents for muffling independence. Sibelius is far removed mentally and physically from the cultural confusion generated by the War.

The craze for new chords, such as the submerged tenth, the overbulged eleventh, and the plus-fours tone-cluster; the reams of calculatory jargon anent such juicy foibles as atonality and quarter-tonal counterpoint; the vaudevillian additions to the orchestra consisting of typewriters, steam sirens and howitzers;—all such novelties and experiments have been silently ignored by Sibelius, as have all the -isms, -ologies and ultras of the studio tea party attitude to music. And yet more than one outstanding contemporary musicologist has called Sibelius the most original mind that has ever worked in the field of creative music. The ultra-ism-ologist, finding himself becoming anæmic and stifled by the scented atmosphere of the bohemian eccentric club, could do nothing better than fling wide open the window, bare his breast, distend his nostrils and fill himself with the clean, strong northeast wind that blows down on us from Finland—fill himself with the sane and human music of the giant, Sibelius.

Nearly always has too much stress been laid on the Nationalistic element in Sibelius' music. It is there, very true; but only as an inevitable coloring of his profound thought, which is possessed of a universality that stamps down the narrowing fence of Nationalism. It is there most strongly in his program music, in pieces depictive of scenes from the *Kalevala*, the tome of Finnish folk mythology; it is to be noticed in works such as *En Saga*, *The Swan of Tuonela*, *Pohjola's Daughter* and in pieces such as the perennial *Finlandia*, whose inception lies in Finnish patriotism. These programistic works, fine as some of them are, cannot be compared with the masterpieces of absolute music that are the seven symphonies, the string quartet, *Voces Intimæ*, and the violin concerto, Op. 47. In his younger days Sibelius may have been an out and out Nationalist, as enthusiastic for a Finnish national music as was Glinka for a Russian, but, with maturity, has come unquestionably a universality of expression whose ethos is comparable in its originality, sanity, strength and humanism only to that of Beethoven. He is akin to Beethoven also in his love of Nature. Perhaps a certain Finnishism does creep into his most absolute music, when all unconsciously the absolute music of the wind, the hardness of Winter—Finnish wind and Finnish Winter—make themselves

apparent in his thinking. Sibelius' symphonies are redolent of the great emotional obvious while the later ones are also utterly original.

Two courses are open to the creative artist: either he can tackle the well-worn yet everlasting themes of the great obvious, or he can lay his stakes on the abnormal and extraordinary. The former means attempting the same things that were chosen by Homer, Shakespeare, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Beethoven and Wagner. It is a hazardous task that in most instances results in oblivion for the artist, but occasionally the necessary courage for this undertaking is rewarded, and the world slowly realizes it must recognize another Titan. The second course is adopted by temperamental people who have nothing of depth in their natures, but crave to express themselves through some art to the general applause of the *profanum vulgus*. Naturally they adopt that means which will ensure the quickest success, no matter how meteoric it may be. They are not going to risk doing what has been tremendously done by their forebears. So the novelist grovels in the latest theories of sex pathology; the painter does all in his power to flee from representing anything recognizable; the composer writes an elegant concerto for jews' harp and contra-bass tuba. It all makes good copy for the newspapers; it all gives the brainless something to discuss. Sibelius had the courage to choose the former of the two courses. He writes sane music with an ordinary human appeal and an engrossing interest for the musician; the brainless have nothing to discuss and the newspapers no copy. His originality is too sane to be queer.

In appearance Sibelius is striking; a stronger face you could hardly expect to see. He is taciturn and not concerned with fuss and elation. He has the stature and physique of some ancient warrior, out of whose rather gaunt face look eyes that bespeak a warm heart. He was born at Tavastehus in Finland in 1865 and has spent most of his life in that country. He was intended for the law, but soon turned all his energies to music, to the composition of which he has been enabled to devote all his time by a life State grant dating from 1897. His music is often fraught with a manly sadness, rarely introspective or sentimentally melancholy, and never whining or morbid. One is aware of something akin to the essence of Greek tragedy, yet all is tinged with a distinctly Northern pigment. His harmony is never extravagant, the plain triad being the focal point of all his harmonic resource. His melody has often been mistaken for folk-song. This he firmly denies, declaring that he has never used a folk-song as thematic material. His tunes a child can easily sing, and almost every work has a melody that veritably sings. Sibelius realizes that melody is as necessary to meaning in music as is line to meaning in painting. It is in the matter of form or structure that he suggests parallel with Beethoven; both are great architects in sound. The average symphonist begins by presenting two complete ideas, and then proceeds with the attitude of "Now just watch what I can do with these themes; wait till I get to my development section—and the coda!" Sibelius begins with next to nothing; he actually shows you the conception of the idea, which as likely as not has its incipience in a snort from two bassoons. He then absorbs your interest throughout the movement by letting you watch him at work; he lets you hear him thinking out loud, and not till the end of the movement does he for the first time show you the finished idea, melodic or harmonic, in all the pride and splendor of a Sibelian climax.

(Continued on page 386)

Gregorian Chant

NICOLA A. MONTANI

Twenty-seven years ago—or to be precise—on November 22, 1903, the musical world was startled to learn of a decree that had just been promulgated by the then reigning Pope—Pius X—which advocated the adoption of a style of music known as Gregorian Chant, in connection with the liturgical functions. The very term was unfamiliar to most musicians and many organists and choirmasters proceeded to look up old books containing specimens of this supposedly antiquated form of music. The composer, the earnest student of musical history and the seminarian were, of course, familiar with the Chant, as were travelers who had been fortunate enough to hear certain choirs in the monasteries of Europe. The layman, however, received the impression that all modern music, including his favorite Masses by Mozart, Haydn and Schubert, was to be discarded and only this “doleful” Chant was to be heard in the Churches. With the passing of the years there has come a fuller appreciation of the artistic motive which, together with the more important liturgical reasons, prompted the Holy Father to issue such a seemingly drastic order.

In the light of a clear perspective one wonders that the order barring the operatic style from the Church was not made even more stringent, for things had come to such a pass that the Mass itself was considered merely an incident. The performances given by many choirs, attempting to render musical masterpieces with inadequate forces, actually made a travesty of the liturgical services. Apart from the liturgical or ecclesiastical phases of the question, it is now acknowledged that the Pope, in his advocacy of the Chant, rendered a great service to the cause of musical art.

Since 1903, the thoughts of musicians, composers and teachers have been centered on Gregorian Chant. Schools have been opened in this country and in Europe; Chant now occupies an honored place in the curriculum of Conservatories, and Choirs vie with one another in giving authentic renditions. In Ireland, Belgium, France and Holland prize contests are held every year—just as in the days of the Sängerknaben, with this difference only: Gregorian Chant is sung. This renaissance has not been confined to Europe, but has spread to this continent as well. The influence of certain Societies, organized for the purpose, has been exerted in behalf of the long neglected art-form. Composers, not only in recent times, but in other periods since the time of Palestrina, have borrowed the Chant themes as leading motives in their choral and symphonic works. Liszt, Moussorgsky, Tchaikowsky, Debussy, Respighi,* and other modern composers have all paid tribute to the power of these melodies by incorporating them in their works.

Before proceeding to a discussion of these remarkable records made by the Solesmes Abbey Choir (see end of article for particulars of the records), it may be interesting to outline, briefly, the particular characteristics of the Chant in order that those unfamiliar with Gregorian Chant may grasp its salient features and know what differentiates it from modern music.

* Respighi utilizes the melody of the “*Sanctus*” as given in Record V-7347 of this series, while the main theme of the Symphony in G minor of Kallinow is taken from the Kyrie “*Orbis Factor*” V-7348. Mahler in his Symphony of a Thousand used the Plain Chant “*Veni Creator*” as a principal theme.

First of all, upon hearing the Chant (when sung by a well-trained choir) one is struck by the apparent formless character of the melodies; there is no definite beat, and one is at a loss to determine whether it is two or three pulse rhythm. This vague rhythmic pulsation is so foreign to our modern tempi with their heavy-footed and strongly accented down-beat that the listener becomes just a bit puzzled. There seems to be a constant "flow" of melody and the vocalist especially will note the predominance of the legato style (the first essential to the correct rendition of these melodies). Then there is the matter of key. The tunes seem to be in major and minor at the same time, but there is no raised half-step at the cadence and this is again contrary to our modern diatonic system.

The explanation is simple; there are eight modes in Gregorian Chant—eight scales in other words, and the Gregorian enthusiasts point to this as one of the earmarks of superiority of the Gregorian system over the modern with its poverty stricken major and minor modes. To obtain an idea of these modes one may play the white keys of the piano from D under the first line to D on the fourth line (omitting B flat and C sharp). This is the scale of the first mode. Melodies of the first mode lie in this compass and have as a dominant note A. The final note of all melodies in the first mode is D. Other modes follow in a series of fifths (for instance, the second mode begins in the fifth note of the first mode, transposed an octave lower; thus the scale of the second mode is from A below the staff to the A in the second space (only the white keys of the piano are used). The dominant of this mode is F, the final is again D. Each mode was considered by the ancients to have its own individual character; the first, grave; the second, sad; the third, mystic; the fourth, harmonious; the fifth, joyous; the sixth, devout; the seventh, angelic, the eighth, perfect. The modern "quarter-tone" was also used by the early Gregorianists; this, however, became obsolete with the introduction of the staff.

The listener, upon repeated hearings, will soon be able to grasp the architectural form of the melodies, for they present very distinct and clear-cut outlines. The absence of accompaniment will also be noted in these recordings. This is in keeping with ancient traditions, for the organ as an accompanying instrument was unknown in the early centuries. Nowadays, Chant is generally accompanied by the organ, but there are purists who claim that "the harmonies engendered by the succession of tones in the melody are sufficient" and "the ear supplies its own accompaniment." At any rate, the absence of accompaniment does not detract; in fact, one is able to concentrate on the exquisite beauty of the melodies to better advantage without the disturbing factor of vertical block chords attached to a horizontal melodic scheme. One familiar with Latin will be able to grasp the close relation between text and music. (Wagner was an enthusiastic admirer of the Gregorian Chant because of this element of cohesion.)

Modern composers have attempted to recapture the melodic freedom found in the Gregorian Chant, but have succeeded only in imitating it through the use of the frequent change of time signature; witness the ultra modern score with its alternating signatures: 9/16, 5/8, 7/8, etc.

The absence of the bar line is responsible for the suppleness of the melodic line and the freedom from rigid tempo. Many, in describing Gregorian Chant, have fallen into error in stating that there is a lack of rhythm. In fact, the rhythm is the most fascinating feature of the renditions as manifested by the singing of the Solesmes monks. The discoveries of such great scholars as Dom Pothier and Dom Andre Mocquereau, O.S.B., who made a life study of these ancient manuscripts, prove the existence of a very definite rhythmical system based on natural laws.

The naturalness and absence of any artificial striving for effect is characteristic of the singing of the Solesmes Abbey Choir. There is a fine regard for the purely musical elements; shading, nuance and variety in tonal color are in evidence throughout. The compositions here recorded date back to the tenth century; many of the melodies are probably of more remote antiquity. Each composition illustrates a particular form of Gregorian art; thus we have specimens of the *Responsory*, the *Antiphon* and the *Hymn*. The various portions of the Mass are given in the Ordinary—*Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Sanctus*, *Benedictus*, and *Agnus Dei*, while the Propers are illustrated by diverse Introits, Graduals, Alleluias, Offertories and Communions. With the exception of one number from the Monastic Antiphonary, all the Chants have been taken from the official Vatican Graduale and Antiphonale, and cover the various seasons of the Liturgical Year, including Holy Week.

The renditions are uniformly excellent and reflect great credit on singers and conductor alike. There is no room reverberation and no suggestion of blasting, and for this the Victor Company deserves every commendation. Choirmasters will welcome these records, for they give the authentic Solesmes interpretation of the Chant. This matter of interpretation has been discussed for many years by eminent authorities and particularly among specialists in Ecclesiastical Music. These records will serve to clarify many a doubtful and debated point in the matter of Plain Song rhythm. As object lessons for choirs no better medium could be provided.

The music lover who has concentrated upon the operatic or symphonic styles in his selection of records will not regret adding these records to his repertoire, for here we have the very source from which all our musical forms have stemmed.

THE RECORDS

Gregorian Chant: Mass "Lux et Origo" (Ed Vaticana No. 1)—*Kyrie Eleison* (VIII Mode); *Agnus Dei* (IV Mode); *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* (IV Mode); *Sanctus* (IV Mode); Mass for the dead—Introit *Requiem Aeternam* (VI Mode); Tract *Absolve Domine*; Offertory *Domine Jesu Christe* (VII Mode); Gradual *Christus Factus est* (V Mode) (Maundy Thursday); Graduals *Qui sedes* (VII Mode) (3rd Sunday in Advent); *Dirigatur Oratio Meo* (VII Mode) (19th Sunday after Pentecost); Mass for Doctors—Alleluia *Justus Germinabit* (1st Mode); Communions *Memento verbi Tui* (IV Mode) (20th Sunday after Pentecost); Mass for a Virgin not a Martyr—*Quinque prudentes Virgines* (V Mode); *Pascha Nostrum* (VI Mode) (Easter Sunday); Offertories—*Ad te levavi* (II Mode) (1st Sunday of Advent); *Meditabor* (II Mode) (2nd Sunday of Lent); Antiphon *Montes Gelboe* (1st Mode) (1st Vespers of the 5th Sunday after Pentecost; from the Monastic Antiphonary; Offertory *Custodi me* (1st Mode) (Tuesday in Holy Week); Responsory *Ecce Quomodo moritur justus* (IV Mode) (Holy Sunday Tenebrae); Responsory *Tenebrae Factae Sunt* (VIII Mode) (Good Friday Tenebrae); Mass *Cum Jubilo* B. V. M. Vat. Ed. No. IX—*Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*; Hymn *Adoro te* (V Mode); Antiphon *Salve Regina* (V Mode); Introit *Spiritus Domini* (VIII Mode) (Pentecost Sunday); Communions: I *Spiritus Sanctus Docebit vos* (VIII Mode) (Monday—Pentecost Week); *Spiritus qui a Patre* (VIII Mode) (Tuesday—Pentecost Week); Introit *Da Pacem* (1st Mode) (18th Sunday after Pentecost); *Kyrie Orbis Factor* (1st Mode) (Ed. Vat. No. X Ad Lib.); Offertory *Precata est Moyses* (VIII Mode) (12th Sunday after Pentecost); Offertory *Jubilare Deo* (1st Mode) (2nd Sunday after Epiphany); Responsory *Descendit* (1st Mode) (Christmas Matins); Alleluias *Ascendit Deus* (IV Mode) (Ascension Day); *Assumpta est Maria* (V Mode) (Feast of the Assumption); Responsory—*Media Vita* (IV Mode) (Septuagesima); Responsory (Septuagesima) *Christus Resurgens* (II Mode); Antiphons: Alleluia *Lapis Revoltus est*; Alleluia *Quem Queris mulier*; Alleluia *Noli Flere Maria* (Easter Chants) (V Mode); Hymn—*Urba Jerusalem* (IV Mode) (From Dedication Feast); Hymns—*Virgo Dei Genitrix*; *O Quam glorifica*; Hymns to the Blessed Virgin (II Mode). Twenty-four sides. Sung by the Monks' Choir of Saint-Pierre de Solesmes Abbey conducted by Dom J. Gajard, O.S.B. Twelve 12-inch discs in two albums (V-7341 to V-7352; Victor Set M-87). \$24.

A Viennese Composer

RICHARD J. MAGRUDER

Sakuntala—Queen of Sheba—Rustic Wedding—In Springtime



The centenary of the birth of Carl Goldmark occurred last May 18. It passed almost unnoticed.* There were, of course, a few odd paragraphs and brief notices scattered here and there in the musical journals, setting forth in stately and properly dignified terms the fitting things about a dead and highly esteemed, but almost entirely forgotten, composer. But on the whole the centennial was a quiet, unassuming, hardly noticeable affair, scarcely very flattering to the memory of Goldmark. Even Columbia, whose laudable fondness for centennials is well known, failed to notice this one, or, at any rate, showed no manifest interest in it. In Vienna, where Goldmark spent a good portion of his life and first achieved genuine recognition, more attention was paid to the occasion. The recent releases of the *Rustic Wedding* Symphony, the *Sakuntala* and *In Springtime* Overtures, all played by the Philharmonic Orchestra of that city, were in all likelihood prompted by the centennial.

That Goldmark should be so readily forgotten isn't an altogether puzzling matter. For he wasn't a great composer. Nor could he be called one by any conceivable stretch of the imagination. At best, in fact, he was scarcely more than second-rate. To say that he was one of the most attractive and appealing of the vast horde of talented, clever, charming and not very important second-raters, indeed, would be to place him in a niche into which he fits with remarkable comfort and snugness. It is customary, of course, when the dreadful discovery is made that some deserving composer or other is being ignobly neglected, to wax mightily indignant, with loud and sonorously voiced protests that conductors, opera managers and arrangers of programs are all infamous scoundrels, without a particle of common decency about them. Save in those few cases where works of enduring merit are unaccountably ignored through sheer laziness, this attitude, now so annoyingly or amusingly familiar, according to the amount of earnestness or lack of humor with which it is advanced, is hard to understand. One thing about it, though, is immediately impressive: it is generally adopted most enthusiastically by those whose ideas in other directions are not distinguished by any conspicuous novelty or force. To discover that this or that work of a composer is being neglected is really not a labor calling for a great amount of intelligence. An edition of *Grove's*, a tolerable acquaintance with contemporary musical affairs, and an illimitable capacity for growing indignant over the trivial are the only requisites. Equipped with these, one can make a very sizeable commotion.

For neglect, after all, providing it be not too complete and sweeping, isn't always so disastrous as is commonly believed. Not infrequently, indeed, it is decidedly favorable to a composer's standing. Sometimes it renders an unarguable service. Suppose, for example, we heard Tschaikowsky's *Fourth*, *Fifth* and *Sixth* Symphonies only once in every five years, suppose Beethoven's *Fifth* were tucked away, with becoming reverence, for a year or so and his *Eighth* quietly substituted in its

* Erich Kleiber included the *Springtime* Overture on one of his early Philharmonic-Symphony programs this Fall, but that alone can scarcely be called a very handsome tribute.

place—suppose, by some incomprehensible miracle, these things were done. Isn't it quite feasible that we would all take a more active and amiable interest in the former's disturbing problems and the latter's magnificent battle with Fate? Well, in Tschaikowsky's case, at all events, it would be rendering him a service of some consequence: those who now stuff their ears politely when his symphonies are played would take an infinitely more assiduous interest in his frenzied, but not entirely original, discovery that things in this world are not always arranged especially for the pleasure and comfort of its inhabitants.

No, neglect, in the final analysis, isn't so bad. Turning to the field of literature, one finds the peculiar and instructive case of James Branch Cabell. Some years ago, when he was known to only a few connoisseurs, and hence was "neglected," it was an entrancing pleasure to read his books. But later, with even the boarding school girls smirking delicately over the shocking ribaldries they thought they detected in *Jurgen*, a good deal of the fun was spoiled. Now that the customers of the book clubs, in their frantic search for "culture," have decided that Cabell and Poictesme are old-fashioned and not so facinorous after all, of course, his original readers can return to him peacefully, with the added satisfaction of watching the barbarians scramble for more congenial matter.

It is thus difficult to lament the infrequency with which Goldmark's pieces are now played. Had they been performed as relentlessly as have Tschaikowsky's, it is pretty certain that most of us would feel inclined to dismiss these records quite tartly and with ill-humor. As it is, they come to us with a certain freshness and a mild element of novelty that are disarming and pleasing. Heard occasionally and under suitable conditions, which, in view of a certain violently discussed law, it would be an indecorum to explain, they charm with what Richard Specht calls their "scarlet, heavy-scented, burning melody," and "the transports of his [Goldmark's] orchestral sound," which exude "an intoxicating perfume of nard and frankincense, of eastern roses and the heather of Puszta." Mr. Specht, conceivably, may be somewhat lavish and reckless with his eastern roses, frankincense and heather of Puszta, but nonetheless there is considerable appositeness in what he says.

Goldmark has suffered a fate not uncommon to artists: his fame burned brightest during his lifetime. His works were played everywhere, and when he died in 1915, he left a world that must have seemed immensely agreeable to him.

Born in Keszthely, Hungary, May 18, 1830, he revealed a musical talent at an early age. His father, a cantor in the town synagogue, earned only a scant living from his post, so that it was impossible to give Carl the musical education his talents warranted. The town schoolmaster one day heard the boy hum an original melody and was so impressed with his musical gifts that he forthwith promised to teach him the rudiments of music. Accordingly, an intensive course in the elements followed, and in 1844 he was enrolled in the Odenburger Musikverein as a pupil of violin and composition. The next year he gave a violin recital and was generously proclaimed a genius by press and public alike.

Next he was sent to Vienna, and in 1847 he was enrolled in the city's conservatory. Hard, bitter years followed, during which he was compelled to do a great deal of dull hack work. But his *Sakuntala* Overture, first produced in 1865, aroused critical interest, and in 1875 the performance of the opera *The Queen of Sheba* securely established him as one of the foremost composers of the day.

Goldmark ranked as perhaps the outstanding composer in Vienna when Johannes Brahms decided to make that city the centre of his activities. Brahms' arrival was almost in the nature of a dethronement for poor Goldmark, who was much dis-

turbed by this new turn of affairs and was not entirely devoid of jealousy. He was too good a musician to fail to perceive Brahms' greatness, and however much he might dislike it, he was forced to admit, if only to himself, that he had met his peer.

The story of their relationship is a curious one and does not reveal each man's best and most lovable traits. This relationship was compounded "on both sides," according to Richard Specht, who knew both men intimately, "of irritable appreciation, reluctant affection and jealously watchful admiration, without either of them being aware of these feelings." Goldmark was profoundly impressed with Brahms' stupendous genius, and in consequence was anxious always to appear at his best before the Hamburg master. Brahms, too modest to realize this, was in the habit of teasing Goldmark unmercifully. "You see," Brahms once told Specht, "Goldmark is such a capital fellow, both as a man and as a musician; the only trouble is that he is so susceptible, and so I cannot forbear to tease him. I am often sorry afterwards; still, he ought not to be so silly and should know how to take a joke." Brahms, however, was not quite so innocent as he makes himself out to be. Some of what he mellifluously calls "teasing" really amounted to unpardonable rudeness, and there is little wonder that the two men were often ill at ease and constrained in each other's company. Yet there was a strong attraction between the two, and once they even went off to Italy together. And Brahms could be generous on occasion. Shortly before his death he went to the opera to hear the first performance of Goldmark's *Das Heimchen am Herd*, based on Dickens' *Cricket on the Hearth*. It was warmly received, and an interlude, *So viel Stern am Himmel stehn*, had to be repeated. A debate arose as to whether the passage in question was a folksong quotation or the composer's own idea. Brahms was consulted. "No," he said, "it is not a folksong—but it may become one." And once Brahms wrote to the Herzogenbergs regarding Goldmark: "I should like to have him here. He is a delightful fellow, such as we have or see but rarely here."

The *Sakuntala* Overture, Op. 13, made Goldmark famous. It has been in the European repertoire since 1865, and in that of America since 1877. The music is based on Kalidassa's Indian drama *Sakuntala*. The following story of the drama is printed as a preface to the score:

Sakuntala, the daughter of a nymph, is brought up in a penitentiary grove by the chief of a sacred caste of priests as his adopted daughter. The great king Dushianta enters the sacred grove while out hunting; he sees Sakuntala, and is immediately inflamed with love for her A charming love scene follows, which closes with the union (according to Grundharveri, the marriage) of both The king gives Sakuntala, who is to follow him later to his capital city, a ring by which she shall be recognized as his wife A powerful priest, to whom Sakuntala has forgotten to show due hospitality, in the intoxication of her love, revenges himself upon her by depriving the king of his memory and of all recollection of her Sakuntala loses the ring while washing clothes in the sacred river When Sakuntala is presented to the king, by her companions, as his wife, he does not recognize her. Her companions refuse to admit her, as the wife of another, back into her home, and she is left alone in grief and despair; then the nymph, her mother, has pity on her and takes her to herself Now the ring is found by some fishermen and brought back to the king. On his seeing it, his recollection of Sakuntala returns. He is seized with remorse for his terrible deed; the profoundest grief and unbounded yearning for her who has disappeared leave him no more On a warlike campaign against some evil demons, whom he vanquishes, he finds Sakuntala again, and now there is no end to their happiness.

The Overture is simply and attractively written. Its melodies are engaging and fresh, and they are put together with brilliant skill. The performance here is only fair. The recording is good, and the orchestra has a pleasant warmth of tone, but Krauss seems unable to inject much life into the proceedings.

The *Einzugsmarsch* from *Die Königin von Saba* has been available for some months, but the disc is an exceptionally fine one, and so belongs with these later recordings. The *Queen of Sheba* is considered by many to be Goldmark's masterpiece, and was first produced in Vienna on March 10, 1875. By 1925 the work had been sung 235 times in Vienna alone, not to mention its numerous performances elsewhere. Hanslick, a brilliant, but not always reliable, critic, examined the score before the opera was produced, and said that the *Entrance-March of the Queen of Sheba*, the selection recorded here, was the only part of it worth performing. With its fine use of Oriental color and its bright orchestral effects, the march is an imposing piece of work. Leo Blech is a thoroughly trustworthy conductor, and he and his well-trained men remind us once again of their unfailing competence. The recording is excellent; it is, in fact, quite the finest to be found in any of these Goldmark discs.

The *Ländliche Hochzeit*, or *Rustic Wedding*, Symphony was first performed at a Philharmonic concert in Vienna under Hans Richter on March 12, 1876. The term "symphony" here is rather misleading, for actually there is no trace of the sonata form in the work; it is, more properly, a suite of characteristic tone-poems. It became enormously popular, and soon took an important part in symphonic programs everywhere. Today, though, little is heard of this music, which, if it isn't especially profound, at least has the virtues of being honest, melodious and effective. Its broadly sentimental tunes are frequently very appealing. The work is divided into the following sections: *Wedding March, with Variations; Bridal Song; Serenade; In the Garden; Dance; Finale*. The theme of the first movement is said to bear a certain resemblance to the Portuguese hymn *Adeste fideles*, which may or may not have been intentional. In writing the movement, Goldmark had in mind the numerous groups of wedding guests marching up to the church and disappearing one after another inside. The *Bridal Song* is supposed to be sung by the friends of the bride. It suggests a scherzo and trio, and makes charming use of the dainty tune upon which it is based. The *Serenade* consists of a brief prelude and a duet sung by two oboes; this is varied and developed by other instruments. *In the Garden* is a love scene. In it the tenor is suggested by 'cellos and horns and the soprano by the violins and the higher woodwinds. The *Dance* is based on a lively dance tune, which is worked up with increasing energy and spirit. There is a brief episode in the middle, in which the tender garden theme is heard, and the concluding passages are contrived with the utmost brilliance and skill. Recording and interpretation are thoroughly satisfactory. Robert Heger's reading is well-proportioned and adjusts itself to the music's varying moods.

In Springtime Overture was first performed in 1889. It consists of three themes: the first is a fiery and impetuous one, played by the violins; its contrasting theme,

THE RECORDS

Ländliche Hochzeit Symphony No. 1, Op. 26. Ten sides. Played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Robert Heger. Five 12-inch discs (V-AN263 to V-AN267). \$1.75 each.

Die Königin von Saba: Act 1—*Einzugsmarsch*. Two sides. Played by the Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Leo Blech. One 12-inch disc (V-EH354). \$1.75.

Im Frühling Overture. Two sides. Played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. One 12-inch disc (V-AN438). \$1.75.

Im Frühling Overture. Two sides. Played by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Frederick Stock. One 12-inch disc (V-6576). \$2.

Sakuntala Overture. Four sides. Played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. Two 12-inch discs (V-C1820 and V-C1821). \$1.75 each.

the second, is played by the strings, with embellishments and arabesques from the woodwinds, suggesting the awakening of nature (Strawinsky and Goldmark differ radically in their conceptions of this annual event!); and the third, introduced by the violins, is developed canonically. Ingenious use is made of these themes, and the Overture closes with a sparkingly animated *Finale*. It is an enjoyable piece, and the Vienna band, under Krauss, performs creditably. Because of superior recording, it is better than the Chicago Symphony Orchestra version.

There may not be a great deal in Goldmark to arouse profound admiration, but there is plenty in him to enjoy, and a good bit of it can be found on these records. They are well worth trying.

New York Letter

NEW YORK, October, 1930.

Bursting forth full grown like Minerva issuing from the head of Jove (as two reviewers elegantly remarked), the new music season was ushered in October 4 with the 2548th concert of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra. Erich Kleiber, Generalmusikdirektor of the Berlin Staatsoper since 1923, conducted.

In the course of a program conspicuous by its conformity to conventional ground, Kleiber revealed himself to be more a musician than a personality, more intent on doing his work well and effectively than providing a spectacle for the audience. The Viennese conductor's program comprised Weber's *Der Freischutz* Overture, Mozart's *Serenade No. 9* (K. 320), Beethoven's *Symphony No. 8 in F Major* and Richard Strauss' capricious tone poem, *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*. The novelty, oddly enough, was the Mozart number, which, it seems, has never been played here before. Nor has it been recorded. In every piece but this, Kleiber conducted, Toscanini-wise, without a score. He occasionally dispenses with his baton, preferring to indicate his desires regarding tempo and rubato with his hands.

The press, more cautious than critical, decided to reserve outspoken opinion as to Kleiber's directorial ability until a later day. Although this first concert showed little individual treatment of the scores rendered, Kleiber's artistic integrity and conductorial capacity promise fireworks before the termination of his session. Modern German music is to come later.

Erich Kleiber is an experienced recording conductor. He tells, humorously, of the obstacles attending his studio activities in the days of acoustical recording, when he made some Mozart records for Vox. His fame as a Mozart conductor naturally presupposes that his favorite recordings are his Mozart discs. They are. The *Six German Dances*, recorded for Polydor, have given him no end of enjoyment because of the comment which they brought from his admirers. A Viennese painter, having heard Kleiber conduct these delectable pieces in Buenos Aires, later picked up the recordings of the dances while he was in the South of France and immediately communicated his joy to the conductor. Regarding fan mail, the beaming musician humorously relates the tale of a South African Negro who applied for a position as vocalist in one of Kleiber's operatic recordings. From Japan, though, come the most numerous and sincere letters, usually in appreciation of Kleiber's Mozart interpretations, especially those of the *E Flat* and *Prague* Symphonies. Mrs. Kleiber adds that the royalty returns show, too, that the Japanese are great admirers of Mozart!

Unfortunately, Kleiber will not record with the Philharmonic-Symphony for Victor this year. He has lately signed a contract for exclusive recording for the newly formed Ultraphon Company in Germany. His first recording for this concern was a Schönberg orchestration of a Bach Prelude and Fugue. Sometime ago, through the courtesy of Mr. Joseph Brogan, of The Gramophone Shop, I heard these superb records. Now Mr. Brogan tells me that his only set, brought back from a late trip to Germany, is mislaid. But the two records will probably be available soon. Other Kleiber recordings for Ultraphon include *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*, which figured on his first program here.

The new Philharmonic-Symphony conductor feels keenly the value of recorded music, principally because of its significance to posterity. "How wonderful it would be," he exclaimed in an interview, "to have a recording of Richard Wagner's conducting. Tradition! Bah!—tradition as known today is as authentic as the inheritors care to make it. True tradition is possible only from first-hand acquaintance with the composer. Ah, if we had a record of Wagner conducting the original Bayreuth orchestra in the Prelude to *Parsifal*—then we would know the real and truly authentic tradition. Fifty years from now, when Richard Strauss is dead, will not the excellent Polydor recordings of his own interpretations be invaluable? . . . Caruso's records already demonstrate the fact that even the singers' interpretative art will be studied by means of gramophone records. Today, in Germany, many of the leading tenors of the State Opera value highly Caruso's records as examples of perfect operatic singing."

This highly interesting and enthusiastic conductor greatly admires the records made by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra. "These records are superb. Nowhere in the world today can you find truer reproduction of orchestral music. But, then, why not? Stokowski takes a great personal interest in recording."

This interview with such an earnest musician and democratic personality was significant from every angle. With conductors like Kleiber supporting the gramophone, surely recorded music will advance. Kleiber is not hindered by the old-fashioned ideas so many musicians of repute and brilliance retain. He is a thorough modernist, and is a good friend of Schönberg, whom he physically resembles.

Another interesting personality in the recording field to appear in a local recital was Erika Morini. This gifted violinist played before a full house at Carnegie Hall, October 5. About the same time I heard her splendid recordings of the Mozart *Sonata in B Flat* (three 12-inch red label H.M.V. records). Her playing is characterized by a delicate technique and a range of fine temperamental color.

Lynnwood Farnam opened his series of free organ recitals, "Bach and His Fore-runners," at the Church of the Holy Communion, October 5. The Bach *Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C Major*, which concluded the first concert, brought out the painful fact that this great work has never been recorded. Since Farnam teaches and plays in Philadelphia, which is close to Camden, why doesn't he record a Bach series for Victor? I hope that many of his admirers will make that an issue with one of the companies, at least.

And, while making your prayers, why not do a little imploring for more Debussy by Garden and Giesekeing? They give a joint all-Debussy recital here October 25.

Richard Gilbert.



ORCHESTRA

SPANISH

C-67818D

to

C-67822D

- (a) *La Vida Breve*: Dances Nos. 1 and 2. (Falla.) Two sides. Rendered by Orchestra and Chorus of Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Brussels, conducted by Maurice Bustin. (b) *En la Alhambra*. (Bretón.) Two sides. (c) *Polo Gitano*. (Bretón.) One side and Pepita Jiménez: *Intermezzo*. (Albéniz.) One side. (d) *Navarra*. (Albéniz.) Two sides. (e) *Danzas Fantásticas*: *Ensueño* and *Orgia*. (Turina.) Two sides. Played by Enrique Fernandez Arbos and Madrid Symphony Orchestra. Five 12-inch discs in album. Columbia Set No. 146. \$10.

Every now and then Spanish composers and Spanish artists provide some extraordinarily interesting contributions to the gramophone repertoire. Columbia has always been especially active in Spanish recording activities, and a great many of the finest discs from Spain have appeared on the Columbia export list, where they have necessarily remained more or less obscure. Five of the best of these recordings are here gathered together, enclosed in an album, and issued as a special Spanish set. An exceedingly colorful and varied group of records, the album deserves, and probably will obtain, wide attention.

The first record in the group offers two dances from Falla's *La Vida Breve*, one on each side of the disc. These are numbered one and two. *La Vida Breve* is not a very long opera—no longer, indeed, than *Pagliacci* and *Cavalleria Rusticana*, both of which have been issued in complete recordings of nine records each. A complete recording of *La Vida Breve* would therefore seem not altogether impracticable, since it would not be inordinately expensive to produce. Performed by Spanish artists, it should make an uncommonly attractive album. The first dance given here is, of course, the familiar one that has already been recorded both as an orchestral selection and as a violin solo. It goes a bit more slowly than in other recorded versions, and, in consequence, instruments scarcely heard before now come out clearly and unmistakably. The recording is well-nigh perfect, but the orchestra is somewhat lacking in power and force. The second dance is less familiar. Rendered here with both orchestra and chorus, it is full of life, color and motion, but on the whole it doesn't seem so fine and well-rounded a piece of work as Dance No. 1. The orchestra and chorus are that of the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Brussels, and their rendition is smooth, lively and correctly proportioned.

Some of the other selections in this album have already been reviewed in *Disques*. *En la Alhambra*, a notable piece of recording and playing, was reviewed on page 217 of the August issue, and *La Pepita Jiménez* and *Polo Gitano* were considered in July on page 172. Albéniz' *Navarra*, already available in a superb piano recording by Arthur Rubinstein (V-7249), stands out as one of the finest of these discs. The Madrid Symphony reveals a beautiful quality of tone, warm and intense, excellently adapted to music of this type. The music is, to American ears at least, typically Spanish. A glowing, fervent performance, it constitutes one of Arbos' most perfectly realized recording achievements. Turina's *Danzas Fantásticas* seem somewhat banal. Eugene Goossens' more complete version, reviewed on page 88 of the May issue, was more forceful and compelling than the present one.

**TSCHAI-
KOWSKY**

**V-7294
to
V-7298**

Symphony No. 6 in B Minor (*Pathétique*). Ten sides. Played by Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. Five 12-inch discs in album. Victor Set M-85. \$10.



Miniature Score: Philharmonia No. 64.

Now that the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Koussevitzky has recorded the *Pathétique*, the three works by which Tschaikowsky is best known—his *Fourth*, *Fifth* and *Sixth Symphonies*—can be definitely placed on the list of works requiring no further attention from the recording companies—at least, not until some very marked improvements are made in recording methods. The *Fourth* and *Fifth*, having been felicitously recorded by Stokowski and Mengelberg, have occupied conspicuous places on this list for some months; under present conditions, indeed, it would be hard to conceive of their being appreciably improved. With the *Pathétique*, though, things have been different. Until this recording appeared, one did not feel as if it had received the best the gramophone is capable of giving. When electrical recordings were first released, Albert Coates supplied a thrilling—in those days, an incredible—performance of the work. But much has happened since then, and today Coates' *Pathétique*, despite the memorable reading, sounds a bit weak and thin. Last year a distinguished recording of the work was released by Columbia, played by Oscar Fried and the Royal Philharmonic; but it was not on the high level of, say, Stokowski's *Fourth* or Mengelberg's *Fifth*.

This new version by Koussevitzky, designed, no doubt, to replace the Coates set in the Victor Musical Masterpieces Series, has everything in its favor—a magnificently trained band and recording that would be hard to equal; so that a detailed comparison with the earlier sets would obviously be unfair. As for the interpretations, there are minor differences, of course, but none of much consequence. Coates' impresses by reason of its superb energy and vigorous driving power; Fried's by its style and strength; Koussevitzky's by its polish and fine poise. The most striking difference occurs in the march of the third movement, which Koussevitzky takes abruptly and at a headlong, rather jerky pace, oddly out of keeping with the rest of his reading. As in the other sets, five records are required to set forth the work. The breaks are pretty much the same, save on side two, where the break is made sooner in the new set. Owners of the Coates and Fried versions will recall that side two ends with the brief bassoon solo just preceding the resounding crash from the entire orchestra, which begins side three. In the Koussevitzky album, the bassoon solo is carried over to side three, and the crash thus occurs about half an inch in. Coming directly after the subdued, mournful section that precedes it, it is infinitely more effective this way.

There are numerous impressive features in the album. The concluding passage of the first movement, a slow descending scale plucked from the strings against a softly sung phrase by the brass and woodwind, is beautifully played and recorded. And in the second movement, not far from the beginning, the phrase of some forty measures, based on repeated D's in the bassoons, basses and tympani, which latter come out remarkably well, is recorded clearly and certainly. . . . The set, then, is recommended chiefly for the fine recording and superlative orchestral playing; the interpretation is revealing and satisfying, but it doesn't represent a noticeable gain over those in the previously released versions.

R. J. M.



**MOZART
SCHUBERT**

**B-90082
to
B-90085**

Symphony No. 40 in G Minor (K. 550). (Mozart.) Played by the Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Richard Strauss. Seven sides and

Twin Brothers: Overture. (Schubert.) One side. Played by the Opera Orchestra, Berlin-Charlottenburg, conducted by Alois Melichar.

Four 12-inch discs in album. Brunswick Set No. 22. \$6.

Miniature Score: (Mozart) Philharmonia No. 27.

MOZART

**V-S10173
IMPORTED**

Impresario: Overture. One side and

Idomeneo: Overture. One side. Both played by Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Robert Heger.

One 12-inch disc. \$1.75.

Miniature Score: (Idomeneo) Eulenberg No. 661.

MOZART

**C-9653
IMPORTED**

Idomeneo: Gavotte. One side and

Andante for Flute and Orchestra. One side. Both played by Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra (Flute solo by Jean Nada) conducted by Dr. Volkmar Andreae.

One 12-inch disc. \$2.

It was James Gibbons Huneker who wrote of the "blitheness, sanity, sweetness" of Strauss' Mozart readings. One would therefore expect the combination of Strauss and Mozart on records to be an illuminating one. It is painful to report that this is not so—at least, not so far as this new *G Minor* is concerned. It is, at best, a second-rate performance. The recording is colorless and ineffective, and the reading oddly flaccid, commonplace and insensitive. The qualities Huneker mentions seem utterly drained from the score. Bruno Walter's version, reviewed in the September issue, remains thus far the most satisfactory and revealing *G Minor*. . . . The *Twin Brothers* Overture, by far the most enjoyable part of this album, was reviewed on page 215 of the August issue The Vienna band has probably never shown to better advantage than in the sparkling *Impresario* Overture, recorded also, both mechanically and electrically, by Albert Coates. The reproduction is rich, ample and generous, and so is the tone of the orchestra. Heger conducts leisurely but surely not dully, and one gets the impression that all concerned are enjoying themselves immensely Richard Strauss is at present engaged in putting the finishing touches on his new arrangement of *Idomeneo*, for which Dr. Lothar Wallerstein, the Viennese stage director, has written a new libretto. Strauss has added an entirely new chorus for the finale, which is said to be perfectly Mozartean in style. In its new version, the work is to be produced at Vienna this Winter, and it will be included in the 1931 Salzburg Festival. The Overture is rendered with fine verve here The *Gavotte* is a sheer delight, and Dr. Andreae never allows its incomparable daintiness and grace to become stilted. The string tone is rich and warm The *Andante* is less successful. The soloist, Jean Nada, is capable enough, but his flute, in relation to the other instruments, is much too loud, and the accompaniment is thus unpleasantly dwarfed.

STRAUSS
(RICHARD) {
C-67814D

Salomé: Dance of the Seven Veils. Two sides. Played by Bruno
Walter and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra.
One 12-inch disc. \$2.



B-90088 {

Salomé: Dance of the Seven Veils. Two sides. Played by the
Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Richard Strauss.
One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.

STRAUSS
(JOHANN) {
V-1481

Die Fledermaus: Du und du—Waltzer, Op. 367. Two sides.
Played by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fred-
erick Stock. One 10-inch disc. \$1.50.

STRAUSS
(JOSEF) {
C-LX40
IMPORTED

The Music of the Spheres, Op. 235. Two sides. Played by the
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner.
One 12-inch disc. \$2.

Various important members of the Strauss group here mingle amiably. It is quite a jump from the homely measures of Josef Strauss' *Music of the Spheres* to the decadent music of Richard Strauss' *Dance of the Seven Veils* from *Salomé*. The *Dance* seems to be making a rapid tour of the recording companies. Only a month or so ago Stokowski and his Philadelphians were on the lists with a finely played and recorded version, and now Columbia and Brunswick issue recordings simultaneously. Bruno Walter's performance, for Columbia, is a superior one, and belongs beside the Stokowski version and the excellent H.M.V. recording by Otto Klemperer. Walter's conception is vivid and brilliant, and the Berlin Philharmonic is responsive. The reproduction, too, is extraordinarily good, save for a brief moment toward the last, when the recording becomes somewhat vague and uncertain . . . Strauss' version of *Salomé's Dance* is uneven and falls below the standard he set in other recordings of his own music. He conducts listlessly and apparently without much enthusiasm, except at the beginning and end of side two, where recording and playing suddenly become uncommonly alive and energetic. The recording, now and then, is a little blurred . . . *Du und du* is one of the loveliest waltzes in *Die Fledermaus*, and this recording by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra should accordingly be welcomed by those who still can respond properly to a well-turned tune. The recording is excellent, and so is the orchestra, but a more zestful interpretation would have helped somewhat . . . Josef Strauss (1827-1870) was the younger brother of the incomparable Johann, and made his début with the latter's orchestra in 1853. Later he formed a band of his own. His health was never of the best, and when some Russian officers brutally thrashed him at Warsaw for refusing to play for them in the middle of the night, the injuries he sustained resulted soon after in his death. Josef composed prolifically, and there are 283 Op. numbers in the list of his works. The *Music of the Spheres* is a quaint, old-fashioned piece, somewhat in the style of Johann. It has an agreeable lilt and swing. Weingartner and the Royal Philharmonic present it in fine style. A facsimile of Weingartner's autograph adorns the label.

**VERDI****C-50249D**

Il Trovatore: Selection. (Verdi-Tavan.) Two sides. Played by British Broadcasting Company's Wireless Symphony Orchestra conducted by Percy Pitt. One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.

THOMAS**O-170.096**

and

O-170.097

IMPORTED

Ballet d'Hamlet: (a) Fête du Printemps et Danse Villageoise; (b) Pas des Chasseurs et Pantomime; (c) Valse Mazurka; (d) La Freya. Four sides. Played by Grand Odeon Orchestra. Two 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

The *Trovatore* selection is a high-spirited, immensely energetic affair, competently recorded . . . Ambroise Thomas (1811-1896) is perhaps best known as the composer of *Mignon*. His *Hamlet*, produced at the Opéra, March 9, 1868, achieved considerable success in Paris, but it never made much of an impression elsewhere. The ballet music given here is full of a tawdry, simpering elegance; with the exception of *Pas des Chasseurs et Pantomime*, which is charming and deftly contrived, it isn't of much consequence. Radio program makers, seeking something not too taxing for their audiences, should find it highly desirable. Neither recording nor interpretation is outstanding.

AUBER**C-G50250D**

Fra Diavolo: Overture. Two sides. Played by Otto Klemperer and Symphony Orchestra. One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.

Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 659.

C-DX69

IMPORTED

The Bronze Horse: Overture. Two sides. Played by Sir Dan Godfrey and Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 651.

Daniel-Francois-Esprit Auber (1782-1871) was a prolific composer of French operas. His music, someone once said, "is sparkling and has the true Parisian 'chic' and polish." Maybe so; but "chic" and "polish" are not very conspicuous here. A somewhat rough and coarse energy seems more in evidence . . . *Fra Diavolo* was first produced in 1830. This recording, save in those parts where the full orchestra is employed, when an unpleasant feeling of tightness creeps in—a fault which has been apparent in all of Klemperer's recent Parlophone repressings,—is a good and stirring one. The solo instruments, particularly the drums at the beginning, come out convincingly . . . The *Bronze Horse* dates from 1835 and in 1857 it was extended into a grand ballet. Sir Dan Godfrey and his men tackle it here with high enthusiasm.

BRUCKNER**V-C1789**

IMPORTED

Symphony No. 4 in E Flat Major ("Romantic Symphony"). Scherzo. Two sides. Played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. One 12-inch disc. \$1.75.

Miniature Score—Philharmonia No. 197.

So little of Bruckner's music has been recorded and his works are presented so rarely that music lovers should be grateful for even a small offering like a single movement, such as the present one. The outstanding Bruckner recording is, of course, the *Symphony No. 7 in E Major*, issued slightly over a year ago by Polydor. Since then there have been no important releases of works of this composer. The caution exercised in issuing only the *Scherzo* from the *Romantic Symphony* is quite

reasonable, for precisely how popular Bruckner is—at least outside of Vienna—is something that cannot be estimated with any degree of accuracy. The *Scherzo* given here bears the superscription *Jagt* (Hunt), and at the beginning of the Trio the inscription “Dance tune during the repast at the hunt” appears. A horn call predominates throughout the movement; it is music that appeals almost instantly.



**GLAZOUNOW
PROKOFIEFF
C-67812D**

Interludium in modo antico. (Glazounow.) Two sides and
Love for Three Oranges: March. (Prokofieff.) One side. Both
played by Désiré Defauw and Orchestra of Brussels Royal
Conservatory. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

**GLAZOUNOW
DELIBES
C-LX16
to
C-LX18
and
C-LX29
and
C-LX30
IMPORTED**

The Seasons Ballet: (1) Winter; (2) Spring; (3) Summer; (4)
Autumn. (Glazounow, Op. 67.) Played by Symphony Or-
chestra conducted by Alexandre Glazounow. Nine sides and
Le Corsaire: Le Pas des Fleurs—Valse. (Delibes.) One side.
Played by Lucerne Kursaal Orchestra.
Five 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

Alexandre Glazounow visited America last Fall and was received politely but without general enthusiasm. Glazounow, of course, hasn't much to say to the more ebullient of the modernists. Content, for the most part, to present ample doses of luke-warm Tschaikowsky and warmed-over Rimsky-Korsakow, he keeps pretty close to the surface: his music is pretty, but never profound; it never burns. One leaves it with the impression of having just left a mildly attractive but somewhat over-dressed person. But his generous supply of melody and his undeniable skill in obtaining striking and brilliant effects sometimes lend it a certain charm. The two works presented above are quite different in character. The *Interludium* is quiet, sweet music, without much substance . . . Providing one doesn't expect too much, there is no particular reason why the *Seasons* shouldn't provide a fairly enjoyable three-quarters of an hour. If the pleasure of hearing Tschaikowsky's *Casse-Noisette* for the first time still lingers agreeably in your mind, then the *Seasons* warrants your attention. The music was composed for a ballet by Marius Petipa, to whom the work is dedicated. The first section, *Winter*, has four variations: *Hoar-frost*, *Ice*, *Hail* and *Snow*. They are adroitly contrived. There is something immensely appealing about a good, lively snow-storm, and Glazounow, sensing this, has succeeded in conveying the feeling admirably. It is one of the most successful moments in the ballet. The first part of *Spring* is banal and dull, and so is the beginning of *Summer*, with its broad, sentimental melody. The kindly, bearded face of Tschaikowsky, who, had he so chosen, could have offered formidable rivalry to Johann Strauss in the field of waltz writing, peers out of the music of the vivid *Valse of the Cornflowers and Poppies*, which seems just a bit too brilliant and sophisticated for these flowers. *Autumn* recalls music heard in the previous sections. The name of the orchestra is not indicated, but it deserves high praise, for it is a good one. Glazounow conducts with assurance and verve. But the most striking thing about the set is the recording, which is extraordinarily clear, full and round . . . The familiar Prokofieff *March*, coupled, amusingly enough, with the Glazounow *Interludium*, is done slowly and deliberately. The recording is very clear . . . The Delibes piece is immensely charming.



SMETANA

V-AN386

to

V-AN395

IMPORTED

Ma Vlast: Cycle of Six Symphonic Poems—(1) Vysehrad; (2) Vltava; (3) Sárka; (4) From Bohemia's Fields and Groves; (5) Tábor; (6) Blaník. Twenty sides. Played by Bohemian Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by F. Talich. Ten 12-inch discs in album. \$17.50.

Miniature Scores: Eulenburg Nos. 471 to 476.

**SMETANA
DVORAK**

B-90086

and

B-90087

The Moldau: Symphonic Poem. (Smetana.) Three sides and Slavonic Dance, Op. 46, No. 1. (Dvorák.) One side. Both played by Erich Kleiber and the Berlin State Opera Orchestra. Two 12-inch discs. \$1.50 each.

Miniature Scores: Eulenburg No. 472 and Philharmonia No. 178.

Friedrich Smetana has of late been enjoying his share of such fame as the gramophone can bestow upon a composer. The most significant and imposing of the Smetana recordings, of course, is the recently issued *Ma Vlast* cycle, complete and resplendent in a gaily colored album. A passionate patriot and nationalist, Smetana sought in this work to glorify his country, and the cycle, written between the years 1874 and 1879, is dedicated to the city of Prague. It is a noble and eloquent, if rather long-winded, tribute, and its profound and often touching sincerity is evident on every page of the score. The complete work is rather lengthy, and it lacks sufficient variety to sustain interest throughout the entire six sections. Taken singly, though, the various symphonic poems are highly attractive, rich in national characteristics. A certain nostalgic sweetness, homely, but not unpleasing, pervades the cycle.

Vysehrad, the title of the first section, is a famous and historic citadel at Prague. The music depicts, glowingly or dolefully, as the case may be, its past glories and its final downfall. *Vltava* is more familiarly known as *Moldau*, and as such is very popular; it is frequently played in concert, and recordings of it have long been available. The music represents the course of the river Moldau. Sárka was the "noblest of the Bohemian Amazons." Betrayed in love and seeking revenge, this singularly resourceful Amazon had herself bound to a tree. The knight Ctirad, who was attracted by her beauty, released her. When he and his warriors fell asleep after a wild revelry, Sárka, by a blast upon her horn, summoned her companions, and the sleeping warriors were efficiently butchered. *From Bohemia's Fields and Groves* is a musical representation of natural beauties, and is, of course, pastoral in character. *Tábor*, which was the name of the fortress of the Hussites, celebrates the valor and accomplishments of the Taborites. *Blaník* takes its title from the name of a mountain on which are supposed to be sleeping the Hussite warriors, awaiting the time when they will be awakened to serve their country.

The set contains moments of excellent playing and superb recording, impressive for its breadth and depth. The brilliant and tumultuous music of *Sárka* receives magnificent treatment here; the solo instruments come out well, and the full orchestra is convincingly reproduced. The set is a highly creditable achievement . . . Kleiber's recording of *Moldau*, which forms No. 2 of *Ma Vlast*, is issued, appropriately enough, during his term with the Philharmonic-Symphony. It is rendered with warmth and sincerity . . . The Dvorák piece is well played and recorded.

GAUBERT
C-LFX45
 and
C-LFX46
 IMPORTED

Les Chants de la Mer: (1) Chants et Parfums, mer colorée; (2) La Ronde sur la Falaise (Scherzo); (3) Là-bas, très loin sur la mer. Played by Symphony Orchestra conducted by Philippe Gaubert. Two 12-inch discs. \$2 each.



PIERNE
O-123.646
 IMPORTED

Ramuntcho: La Cidrerie; Fandanguillo; Le couvent d'Amezqueta. Two sides. Played by Orchestra of the Concerts Colonne conducted by Gabriel Pierné. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

PIERNE
MACBETH
C-2295D

March of the Little Lead Soldiers. (Pierné.) One side and Love in Idleness. (Macbeth.) One side. Both played by Columbia Concert Orchestra. One 10-inch disc. 75c.

Gaubert and Pierné have already established reputations for quiet, unassuming efficiency as orchestral conductors. Now they appear as both conductor and composer on these records, leaving, as usual, an impression of competence and authority . . . Born in Paris in 1879, Gaubert studied under Taffanel and is a remarkable flautist. As the conductor of the concerts of the Paris Conservatory and at the Opéra, he ranks as one of the prominent musicians of Paris. His list of compositions, not particularly imposing for its length, contains works for orchestra, chamber combinations and a piece for the stage, *Sonia*. *Les Chants de la Mer* is not included on the list, and so is, presumably, of recent composition. There are traces in it of Wagner, of Debussy, of Ravel and others, but it is an agreeable combination, smoothly and adroitly mixed. The work is in three sections. The first begins slowly and mysteriously on the strings and woodwinds. After swelling to an impressive climax, the music sinks to a low, vague murmuring, with muted trumpets, harp, woodwinds and strings prominent. The second movement, a vivacious *scherzo*, is notable for its simplicity and delicacy. The last movement contains moments of surprising power and strength, and the end comes abruptly. Gaubert, obviously a master of his materials, says precisely what he wishes in a neat, orderly, polished manner. *Les Chants* is patently the product of an imaginative, civilized mind, informed by a measured, sensitive intelligence. The music is sufficiently modern to be interesting, but it never exceeds the bounds of good-taste and plausibility. Prudently keeping his head, Gaubert takes good care not to succumb to the fantastic devices that presently engage the attentions of many young composers who are more intent on shocking those whom it is all too easy to shock than performing their proper business: making intelligent music. The reproduction is excellent . . . Among the most important of Pierné's works is the incidental music for a number of dramas, among them Pierre Loti's *Ramuntcho*. The music is graceful, poetic and colorful, and it is charmingly played by the composer. Another selection from this music, *Ouverture sur des thèmes populaires Basques*, is available on O-123.574, played with similar skill by the same artists . . . *The March of the Little Lead Soldiers* is well known. It is competently played and recorded here . . . *Love in Idleness* reveals nothing of note.



**MOUSSORG-
SKY**

B-90089

{ A Night on Bald Mountain. Two sides. Played by Orchestre de l'Association des Concerts Lamoureux, Paris, conducted by Albert Wolff. One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.

Miniature Score: Philharmonia No. 161.

FRANCK

C-67813D

{ Psyché: No. 4—Psyché et Eros. Two sides. Played by Désiré Defauw and Orchestra of Brussels Royal Conservatory. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

This version of *A Night on the Bald Mountain* by Albert Wolff succeeds brilliantly where other recorded performances failed. It is, in fact, the most satisfying and thrilling performance of the work available. It is also not only the best of the current Brunswick releases, but in addition it is one of the finest orchestral recordings of the month. Gaubert's polite, gentlemanly reading, for Columbia, lacked conviction and force; Cloez', for Odeon, sprawled all over the place, with screaming woodwinds, roaring brasses and furiously sawing strings making a terrific, but rather meaningless, racket. But Wolff's interpretation is logically judged; his climaxes are achieved effectively, and his reading throughout is marked with enormous vigor and energy. The nefarious activities on the Bald Mountain are at last thoroughly convincing. The volume is at times overpowering, but the recording is fully equal to it at its loudest. Gaubert's recording was reviewed on page 214 of the August issue, where a brief description of the music was given . . . The Franck piece, a finely played and recorded piece of work, was reviewed on page 85 of the May issue.

SCHUMANN

V-D1840

to

V-D1842

IMPORTED

{ Carnival Suite: (1) Prélude; (2) Pierrot; (3) Arlequin; (4) Valse Noble; (5) Eusebius; (6) Florestan; (7) Coquette; (8) Papillons; (9) Lettres dansantes; (10) Chiarina; (11) Chopin; (12) Estrella; (13) Reconnaissance; (14) Pantalon et Colombine; (15) Valse Allemande; (16) Paganini; (17) Aveu; (18) Promenade; (19) Pause; (20) Marche des Davidsbündler contre les Philistins. (arr. for Russian Ballet.) Six sides. Played by London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald. Three 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

To forestall a deluge of the passionate protests that commonly follow the appearance of a well-known work in a form other than that which its author intended, it should be stated hastily that there are already available at least three highly satisfactory recordings of Schumann's *Carnaval* in its proper form. One of these versions, indeed,—that by Godowsky—is reviewed in this issue under Piano. There therefore is no sound reason for complaint. Schumann's melodies, in fact, seem exceedingly well adapted for orchestral treatment, at least to our, possibly depraved, taste. They are quite obviously at home and thoroughly at ease, as this recording brilliantly attests. Who is responsible for the arrangement remains a mystery; the label merely says "arranged for Russian Ballet." At any rate, the orchestration is bright and vivid, in excellent taste, and the *Carnaval* acquires an indubitable, if a rather different kind of, effectiveness in its new garb. The London Symphony Orchestra has always recorded extremely well, but never any better than here. Sir Landon Ronald's incisive reading is perfectly attuned to the music.

CONCERTO



BACH

C-LX41
and
C-LX42

IMPORTED

Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 in B Flat (For strings). Four sides. Played by Sir Henry J. Wood and his Symphony Orchestra. Two 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 255.

This month, with the *Sixth Brandenburg* and Nos. 10 to 17 of the *Preludes and Fugues*, Bach stands out saliently among the composers represented, which, of course, is precisely as it should be. The *Sixth* is the last of the Brandenburg Concertos, and was originally written for two violins, two violas, two viole da gamba, 'cello and bass. In the vast majority of modern performances the viole da gamba parts are played by the 'cellos, for obvious reasons. "The color is weird and picturesque throughout," Parry says, "and the subject-matter such as befits the unusual group of instruments employed. The two groups maintain their opposition to a great extent in the first movement. In the second, the gambas remain silent, and they have not much to do in the last, as though it had dawned on the composer's mind that the strange color of the instruments tended to become monotonous." The first movement, *allegro*, proceeds briskly and directly; the second, *adagio ma non troppo*, is treated fugally; it is full of Bach's lofty grandeur and commanding dignity; the last movement, *allegro*, is energetic and robust. Sir Henry J. Wood is not always an entirely satisfactory conductor; quite often, indeed, he is a depressingly dull one. But here he gives a truly stunning performance of this noble music.

BEETHOVEN

V-DB1425

to

V-DB1428

IMPORTED

Concerto No. 4 in G Minor, Op. 58. Eight sides. Played by Wilhelm Backhaus (Piano) and London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald. Four 12-inch discs in album. \$10.

Miniature Score: Philharmonia No. 43.

Collectors have had to struggle along as best they could for some years now with the early Parlophone version of this concerto, as dubious and wretched a bit of recording as one could imagine. Backhaus, who has already supplied a superb recording of the *Emperor*, now issues the *Concerto in G*. The *Third Concerto* appeared several months ago by Mark Hambourg, but it was not a particularly good set. This recording of the *Fourth* is notable for several reasons. A felicitous combination, balanced with approximate accuracy, of piano and orchestral recording at their best, these four records constitute as fine an example of concerto recording as one can find, no matter how diligently he may delve into the catalogues. The *Concerto in G*, written in 1806, is said to have been inspired by the idea of Orpheus supplicating the powers of the underworld. Backhaus faithfully preserves the mood of reflective gravity and latent energy, and in the climaxes his piano rings out with judiciously controlled power. The orchestral support is flexible and, happily, not too retiring.



CHAMBER MUSIC

SCHUMANN QUINET

C-D15145

to

C-D15148

IMPORTED

Trio No. 3 in G Minor, Op. 110. (Schumann.) Seven sides and Charade. (F. Quinet.) One side. Both played by Court of Belgium Trio (A. Dubois, violin, M. Dambois, violoncello, and E. Bosquet, piano). Four 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

SAINT-SAËNS RAMEAU

C-LFX10

to

C-LFX13

IMPORTED

Trio in F Major, Op. 18. (Saint-Saëns.) Seven sides and (a) La Pantomime; (b) L'Indiscrete. (Rameau.) One side. All played by Court of Belgium Trio. Four 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

The Court of Belgium Trio made a propitious recording début a month or so ago with César Franck's *Trio in F Sharp*. Here they essay, with equal success, Schumann's *Trio in G Minor* and Saint-Saëns' *Trio in F Major*. One of the three Schumann Trios, the *Trio in D Minor*, has already been recorded by Cortot, Thibaud and Casals. The present work, the last of Schumann's works in this form, was composed in 1851 and published the following year. Critical judgment of the Trio has not been too kind. "In no respect can it compare with the other Trios," says J. A. Fuller-Maitland, "for the gloom of the author's later years has settled upon it so as not merely to give color to subjects on which the music is based, but even to render the form obscure. A curious return is made in the Finale to the mood of a work written in very different times, the Fantasia in C (Op. 17), with the central movement of which the last section of the G Minor Trio has much in common." Schumann, however, had a somewhat better opinion of it. Writing to his publishers, he said: "I have now put the finishing touches. We heard it played two days ago, and it went splendidly. I thought to myself, 'Now you can send it out into the world!' You are to pay me the same for it as for the piano quintet, as a Trio can count on a far larger sale than a quintet." The first movement is serene and thoughtful, brightened, now and then, by the *pizzicato* from the violin and 'cello. The second movement, whose long-drawn, flowing melody suggests Schubert, is a passionate, intense work of deeply felt beauty. The last two sections are zestful and muscular . . . Fernand Quinet whose *Charade*, a bright, attractive little piece, fills out the set, was born in Charleroi, Belgium, in 1898. He studied at the Brussels Conservatory. Quinet took an important part in the recent Eighth Festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music, held in Belgium.

The Saint-Saëns Trio was composed in 1863 and was published in 1867. The mood throughout is one of light-hearted, irresponsible confidence. The first movement is joyous and delightfully fresh. The second is brief, and mercifully so, for it is quite dull. The pawky *scherzo* is properly animated, and the concluding movement is brilliant and emphatic . . . The two brief Rameau pieces are appealing . . . Well managed and sensitive interpretations are given by the Court of Belgium Trio. In the Schumann work, though, the 'cello is a bit too prominent, obscuring the violin and piano. The recording throughout both sets is even and clear.

BORODIN
V-9791

{ Quartet in D Major: Nocturne. Two sides. Played by the Budapest String Quartet. One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.



Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 201.

The lovely Nocturne from Borodin's *Quartet in D Major*—his second work in that form—was reviewed on page 218 of the August issue, where the Guarneri Quartet's version (B-90080) was discussed. The Budapest organization never fails to give a smooth, thoroughly satisfying performance, and its work here is up to its usual high standard.

HARSANYI
C-DFX5
to
C-DFX7
IMPORTED

{ Sonata for Violoncello and Piano. Played by Hans Kindler (Violoncello) and Tibor Harsányi (Piano). Five sides and
Cinq Préludes brefs: (1) Lento. One side. Played by Tibor Harsányi (Piano). (*Reviewed under Piano.*)
Three 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

Young Tibor Harsányi—he is only thirty-two years old—is making excellent headway in perpetuating his art, comparatively unknown outside of Europe, by means of the phonograph and the finest recording artists. He made his first bow to the gramophone public with the exquisite recording of his *Quator à Cordes* (composed in 1925) by the Roth String Quartet. The work was dedicated to this admirable ensemble, who returned the compliment by recording the work. The set was reviewed in the May issue of *Disques* by Joseph Cottler, who discovered (the play is inevitable) not a pathfinder or a trail-blazing modernist, but an eclectic who, excellently schooled in both old and new musical idioms, realized a clever, if not a distinctly new, expression. After hearing the records of the quartet many times, it is not difficult to agree with Mr. Cottler's opinion. Tibor Harsányi, in the quartet, said nothing startlingly new or immediately refreshing. The present sonata, if not blatant with technical modernity, is deeply inspired and eloquent with individual and emotional fancy.

Hans Kindler returns to the business of recording after an absence of some years; in fact, it is his first phonographic performance since pre-electrical days. Because of some distinguished recording, his 'cello's tone is captured with superb realism. Harsányi deserves the compliment of having fine taste in his choice of interpreters. The score of the sonata not being at hand, I am curious to know if this work, like the quartet, is dedicated to the recording performer. The first movement, after an introduction beginning with a passage for 'cello alone, contains a sparkling bit of writing in regular "blues" dance rhythm. The form throughout is classic; while there is nothing acidulous about the harmony, the disposition of the parts and the sonority attained thereby is keen and pungent. The mood of the second movement is in distinct contrast to the first (optimistic and care-free), and it is full of beautiful passages. Truly, this adagio is a veritable song, well written and rounded out and communicated with a peculiar gravity, eloquent and nostalgic in character. The final movement, *vivace*, is turbulent and agitated; a $\frac{7}{8}$ fox trot, dance time, ensues, with measures of "charleston" character neatly punctuated by the supporting piano. This finale is short and not so well written as the preceding movements. A much more effective conclusion could be desired; but, all in all, the sonata has clarity, a certain distinctive gravity in the middle section, and introduces an emotional intensity new to Harsányi's manner. The sonata was first performed during the summer of 1929 at the S.M.I. concert given in Paris.

R. G.



PIANO

**DEBUSSY
LECUONA
V-7304**

{ La Cathédrale engloutie. (Debussy.) One side and
Malagueña. (Lecuona.) One side. Both played by Olga Samaro-
roff (Piano). One 12-inch disc. \$2.

**SCOTT
C-2284D**

{ Pensoso (Three Pastorals: No. 3). One side and
Caprice Chinoise. One side. Both played by Cyril Scott (Piano).
One 10-inch disc. 75c.

La Cathédrale engloutie comes from Book I of Debussy's two sets of Preludes for the piano. The Prelude was suggested by the old Breton legend of the sunken city of Ys. Sometimes on clear mornings, according to the legend, the engulfed Cathedral of Ys, which ordinarily lies beneath the waves, emerges slowly from the depth of the ocean. The ringing of bells and the chanting of priests are heard, after which the vision disappears again beneath the sea. The recording in this disc is perhaps its outstanding feature; it is astonishingly true and life-like, and reproduces Olga Samarooff's skilful playing with ease and fidelity The Scott pieces are likeable. The *Caprice Chinoise* is said to be one of the few genuine transcriptions of Chinese monotones.

**HARSANYI
C-DFX7
and
C-DFX8
IMPORTED**

{ Cinq Préludes brefs: (1) Lento; (2) Allegro; (3) Allegretto
grazioso; (4) Allegro; (5) Lento. Played by Tibor Harsányi
(Piano). Three sides and
Sonata for Violoncello and Piano: Vivace. One side. Played by
Hans Kindler (Violoncello) and Tibor Harsányi (Piano). (*Re-
viewed under Chamber Music.*) Two 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

Harsányi is a Hungarian composer now residing in Paris. He was originally a pupil of Zoltán Kodály, but it cannot be said that he inherits any of that musician's nationalistic tendencies or interest, shared with Bela Bartók, in Hungarian folk-music. Harsányi, it is true, has been influenced a little by every modern school, and it is quite a simple matter to see where this eclecticism ends and true individuality begins. Not much of Harsányi's piano music is available from his publisher's representatives here, but a glance at the scores of his chamber music (an early sonatina; violin sonata, 1926; piano trio, 1926; string quartet, 1925; and the late *Nonet*, in four movements) discloses many atonal bristlings as well as facile excursions into polytonality. Most of it is ingeniously written, which serves to show that Harsányi, as a creative musician, has not been so much occupied with technical innovation or experiment as with stating his intentions in the most appropriate garb, borrowed for the moment.

A number of influences are apparent in the *Cinq Préludes brefs*. We find Schönberg and Milhaud and a dash, occasionally, of Krenek and Hindemith, all of which is tempered to a mildness not to be found in music by any of these contemporaries. Jazz, too, is there. Nonetheless, there is something about Harsányi's musicianship which appeals. It is clean-cut, decidedly optimistic and imbued with vivid, sparkling fancy. His playing is deft. The recording is of splendid quality and volume.

R. G.

SCHUMANN

C-67815D

to

C-67817D

Carnival: Prambule; Pierrot; Arlequin; Valse noble; Eusebius; Florestan; Coquette; Replique; Papillons; Lettres dansantes; Chiarina; Chopin; Estrella; Reconnaissance; Pantalon et Colombine; Valse allemande; Paganini; Aveu; Promenade; Pause; March of the Davidsbundler Against the Philistines. Op. 9. Six sides. Played by Leopold Godowsky (Piano). Three 12-inch discs in album. Columbia Set No. 145. \$6.



BACH

C-LX35

to

C-LX38

IMPORTED

Wohltemperirtes Klavier: Preludes and Fugues (Nos. 10 to 17). Eight sides. Played by Evelyn Howard-Jones (Piano). Four 12-inch discs in album. \$8.

Not many works are accorded such flattering and affectionate attention as has been lavished upon Schumann's *Carnaval* by the recording companies. With Alfred Cortot, Sergei Rachmaninoff, and now Leopold Godowsky, represented on the lists with versions of the work, admirers of Schumann have a wide variety to select from. Well, it is a colorful, adroitly achieved, immensely effective set of pieces, and so it seems well worth the time, care and money devoted to it. The record collector, planning to purchase the set, has before him the agreeable prospect of a stimulating adventure. A description of the work was included in the review of the Rachmaninoff set (page 53 of the April issue of *Disques*), and so it will be unnecessary to comment any further upon the music here. There is much to admire in this latest version, both from a mechanical and an interpretative standpoint. The recording is well up to the standard of recent Columbia piano recordings, and that standard, as has been mentioned before in these pages, is a high and warmly satisfying, if not a noticeably sensational one. There are, of course, occasional blunders in the recording—a certain cloudiness now and then in the treble and faults of such nature—but these are not of sufficient prominence to be offensive. In the main, the piano tone is round, clean, even and plausible. Godowsky's reading is effectively calculated and has an abundance of engaging qualities. A careful hearing of all three versions is suggested to the potential purchaser of the work. It will be an instructive and thoroughly enjoyable hour or so.

Piano records of substance are plentiful this month. Columbia already has a set of Bach's *Preludes and Fugues* (Nos. 1 to 9; Columbia Set No. 120), and now this imported album offers Nos. 10 to 17. Some foreign reviews of the set have declared that Evelyn Howard-Jones' interpretation is essentially one for the musician, being a little too monotonous and dry for the average music lover. That depends upon the amount of musical intelligence ascribed to the average music lover. There has been ample evidence of late that it is uncommonly high and is climbing higher every day. At any rate, the rendition here is not unduly formidable, and there is no sound reason why it should alarm any reasonably patient listener. As was the case with the previous Columbia album, a booklet containing very thorough and succinct annotations by J. A. Fuller-Maitland accompanies the set, making any attempt at analysis superfluous here. The artist is a successful English pianist, noted for his Brahms readings. He studied under d'Albert, and is now prominent as a teacher in London.



OPERA

DONIZETTI

C-D14608

to

C-D14620

IMPORTED

Lucia di Lammermoor: Opera in Three Acts. Twenty-six sides. Rendered by Eminent Operatic Artists of Italy, La Scala Chorus and Milan Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Cav. L. Molajoli. Thirteen 12-inch discs in album. \$26.

THE CAST

Lord Enrico Ashton.....	Enrico Molinari
Miss Lucia.....	Mercedes Capsir
Sir Edgardo di Ravenswood.....	Enzo de Muro Lomanto
Lord Arturo Bucklaw.....	Emilio Venturini
Raimondo Bidebent.....	Salvatore Baccaloni
Alisa.....	Ida Mannarini
Normanno.....	Emilio Venturini

Ladies and Knights related to the Ashtons; Inhabitants of Lammermoor; Pages; Soldierly; and Domestics in the Ashton family.

Lucia di Lammermoor, no doubt, has its points, but they are not particularly impressive in an extended recording such as this one. The work, in fact, does not lend itself especially well to a complete recording. Its various arias, choruses, recitatives, duets and sextettes, of course, may have a certain simple beauty and expressiveness when heard separately; portions of the work undoubtedly make effective recording material. But the whole opera in recorded form is a bit too much for one sitting; it soon becomes monotonous, even a little absurd. Its melodies quickly tire and cloy, its characters and their troubles seem unreal and preposterous, and interest flags long before the piece gets into its proper stride.

The libretto is based on Sir Walter Scott's novel, the *Bride of Lammermoor*. The opera was first produced at the San Carlo Theatre, Naples, September 26, 1835, but it was not heard in America until six years later, when it was performed at New Orleans. Much of Donizetti's fame rests on the work.

The present performance contains many admirable features, but as a whole it does not come up to the standard set by the other Columbia Italian operas. The orchestra frequently sounds harsh and coarse, which is probably largely the fault of the recording, and its rendition of Donizetti's florid music emphasizes disagreeably the composer's fondness for flamboyant, superficial and entirely unnecessary effects. To offset this, though, the singing is generally excellent. Mercedes Capsir's Lucy is an uncommonly appealing one, and she sings the difficult rôle with consummate ease and understanding. Her performance is admirably restrained, and somehow she manages to make poor Lucy and her difficulties fairly convincing—as convincing, indeed, as they could be made. The other members of the cast call for no especial praise or censure; they are very competent. The sextette is a notable piece of work.

Generous cuts have been made here and there in the score, but these excisions are intelligently made, and so are amply justified.

PUCCINI
V-9758
 to
V-9771

La Tosca: Opera in Three Acts. Rendered by Famous Artists,
 Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala under the direction of Carlo
 Sabajno.
 Fourteen 12-inch discs in album. Victor Set M-84. \$21.



THE CAST

Tosca.....	Carmen Melis
Cavaradossi.....	Piero Pauli
Scarpia.....	Apollo Granforte
Angelotti.....	Giovanni Azzimonti
Sargrestano.....	Antonio Gelli
Spoletta.....	Nello Palai
Sciarrone.....	Giovanni Azzimonti

Miniature Score: Philharmonia No. 183.

La Tosca is by no means well adapted for recording purposes. Its complicated plot, its length, its wealth of important stage directions, its vast amount of details, small enough in themselves, but essential to a clear understanding of the work—these offer formidable difficulties to the engineers and artists essaying a complete recording. It is thus an exceptionally high tribute to say that this new Victor set succeeds admirably in presenting the work smoothly, intelligibly and convincingly. The imported Columbia set, reviewed on page 182 of the July *Disques*, achieved this with similar effectiveness. Both performances, in fact, are strikingly alike. There are, to be sure, certain minor differences, but there is none of sufficient importance to make either set definitely superior to the other. It would, therefore, be a futile waste of time and space to submit the two versions to a detailed comparison. One may obtain either set and rest assured that it will be an eminently realistic and satisfactory performance, maintaining an even level of excellence. One could not reasonably demand more.

Apollo Granforte, the Scarpia here, contributes perhaps the outstanding performance. At the end of act one, Scarpia's gloating is conveyed with commanding power and cogent realism. The background of religious music, with the occasional firing of cannon, too, is achieved imposingly. It is in the second act, though, that Granforte is most impressive. In the scenes with Cavaradossi and Tosca, he manages to communicate Scarpia's passion, relentlessness and suave cruelty with extraordinary force and conviction. Carmen Melis' Tosca is realized with only moderate success. Her performance lacks variety and tends to become monotonous. Nor is Pietro Pauli's Cavaradossi particularly remarkable vocally. His voice is frequently strained and colorless.

The other members of the cast perform their duties with intelligence and despatch. The chorus is well-trained and sings exceedingly well in the occasional choral sections. A vivid and swiftly moving orchestral commentary is provided by Sabajno and his men, and in the climaxes they reveal an imposing power. The recording is thoroughly fine and deals impartially with singers and instrumentalists alike. As in the Columbia album, there is a trivial cut on pages 247-248 (piano-vocal score), but there are no omissions beyond the conventional ones.



SAINT-SAENS
V-7320

Samson et Dalila: Act 1—Printemps qui commence. One side and
Samson et Dalila: Act 2—Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix. One
side. Both sung by Sigrid Onegin (Contralto) with orchestra
conducted by Leo Blech. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

RABAUD
C-50247D

Marouf: Act 1, Scene 1—Il est des musulmans. One side and
Marouf: Act 2, Scene 4—La caravane. One side. Both sung by
Georges Thill (Tenor) with orchestra.
One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.

ROSSINI
VERDI
V-7353

Barbiere di Siviglia: Act 1—Largo al factotum. (Rossini.) One
side and
Un Ballo in Maschera: Act 3—Eri tu. (Verdi.) One side.
Both sung by Lawrence Tibbett (Baritone) with orchestra.
One 12-inch disc. \$2.

GOUNOD
V-8185

Faust: Act 1—Mais ce Dieu que peut—Il pour moi? One side
and
Faust: Act 1—Ici je suis à ton service. One side. Both sung by
Fernand Anseau (Tenor) and Marcel Journet (Baritone) with
orchestra conducted by Piero Coppola.
One 12-inch disc. \$2.50.

BIZET
V-7314

Carmen: Act 4—Final Duet. Two sides. Sung by Maria Gay
(Soprano) and Giovanni Zenatello (Tenor) with chorus and
orchestra. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

The operatic selections this month are exceptionally good; in all of the above, in fact, the virtues far outweigh the faults. Sigrid Onegin's numbers from *Samson et Dalila* are rendered flawlessly; orchestra, soloist and recording are equally fine. The selections may be somewhat shop-worn, but they sound fresh and new as interpreted here . . . Georges Thill has not been on the lists very frequently of late, a matter of keen regret, for he is unquestionably one of the finest tenors recording today. His arrival at the Metropolitan is preceded by the release of this disc containing two numbers from Rabaud's popular *Marouf*. They are exotic and tuneful, and Thill sings them smoothly and with warmth of feeling . . . Tibbett's two numbers contain plenty of variety. The *Barbiere di Siviglia* selection is sung jovially and rapidly, in sharp contrast to the more subdued *Eri tu* from *Un Ballo in Maschera*. The orchestral accompaniment is first-rate . . . The *Faust* numbers were reviewed on page 319, of the October issue . . . The final scene from *Carmen* comes from the current International list. The piece is realistically rendered and recorded, and the disc is full of drama.

ORGAN



BACH

C-D11079

IMPORTED

Prelude in E Minor (Book III, No. 10). One side and
Choral: Réveille—toi nous crie la voix. One side. Both played
by E. Commette (Organ—recorded in Cathédrale Saint-Jean
de Lyon). One 12-inch disc. \$2.

O-171.073

IMPORTED

Choral: Par la faute d'Adam, la corruption a envahi le monde.
One side and
Choral: Ardemment j'aspire à une fin heureuse. One side. Both
played by Louis Vierende (Organ—recorded on the grand organ
of Notre Dame of Paris). One 12-inch disc. \$2.

VIERNE

O-171.074

IMPORTED

Improvisation: Marche Episcopale. One side and
Improvisation: Méditation. One side. Both played by Louis
Vierende (Organ—recorded on the grand organ of Notre Dame
of Paris). One 12-inch disc. \$2.

**PATTMAN
LE MARE**

C-50252D

The Storm—Introducing: Eternal Father and Strong to Save.
(Pattman.) One side and
Barcarolle. (Le Mare.) One side. Both played by G. T.
Pattman (Organ). One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.

Commette's numbers, considering the present far from satisfactory state of organ reproduction, are superbly recorded. They are smooth, mellow and true, and the volume, never too loud, is distributed with approximate accuracy. Bach seldom sounds so convincing and appealing on the gramophone organ. Both pieces are poetically rendered . . . Louis Vierende, a pupil of César Franck and Widor, has the organ of Notre Dame at his disposal for his numbers. The recording is extremely powerful, much more so than in the Commette selections. Occasionally, the tone tends to become coarse and uneven. Vierende's competence, though, is obvious and his interpretation of the Bach pieces is vigorous and substantial . . . His own *Improvisations* are not recorded any too smoothly, though a little experimenting with needles and volume can reduce the coarseness of the reproduction to a degree scarcely noticeable. The *Marche Episcopale* is full and impressive, and the volume is almost overwhelming. A good electric machine is necessary to do justice to this disc . . . The Pattman pieces represent a dismal drop from the other records in this batch. *The Storm* is simply a piece of "sound effect" music, neither interesting nor remarkable to the majority of us. And the *Barcarolle* is not appreciably better. Both pieces enjoy singularly fine recording, though.



CHORAL

EARLY ENGLISH

C-9876

and

C-9877

and

C-5546

to

C-5549

IMPORTED

Sixteenth Century Songs: (a) Ah! Dear Heart (Orlando Gibbons); (b) Sister Awake (T. Bateson); (c) Lightly She Whipped (John Mundy); (d) I Follow, Lo, the Footing (Thomas Morley); (e) Trio—How Merrily We Live (Michael East); (f) O Care, Thou Wilt Despatch Me (Thomas Weelkes); (g) Lullaby, My Sweet Little Baby (William Byrd); (h) *Iustorum Animae*—The Souls of the Righteous (William Byrd); (i) *Agnus Dei*—O Lamb of God (From Byrd's *Five Part Mass*); (j) Lady, When I Behold (John Wilbye); (k) Fire, Fire, My Heart (Thomas Morley); (l) Sweet Suffolk Owl (Thomas Vautor); (m) Upon a Bank With Roses (John Ward). Twelve sides. Sung by the St. George's Singers (Unaccompanied). All the above edited by E. H. Fellowes. Two 12-inch and four 10-inch discs in album. \$8.

Professor Dent, in his scholarly article in the new edition of *Grove's Dictionary*, defines the madrigal as "a form of secular composition for two or more voices, practised originally in North Italy in the 14th century and revived in the 16th and early 17th centuries, during which period it assumed the style by which it is chiefly known and became popular over the greater part of Europe." The derivation of the word has occasioned some controversy, but it seems fairly well established that the word "madrigal" is an English adaptation of a Mediæval Latin word *matricale*—an elaborate sort of folk-song. Taken up by the Renaissance musicians, it was made into a beautiful art work.

With the dawn of the Renaissance a wave of unrestrained joy broke over Southern Europe. For a while it was stilled, but burst forth afresh about the middle of the sixteenth century. At that time the madrigal was introduced into England, but the religious upheaval was occupying men's minds to the exclusion of nearly everything else. Only with the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 and the enjoyment of a leisure bred of security could Englishmen give themselves whole-heartedly to the cultivation of the arts and the finer aspects of living. Then came the Golden Age of music and letters, spanning a brief period of some forty years at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century. Dr. Ernest Walker calls this "the Madrigalian Era." When Orlando Gibbons rode to Canterbury in the spring of 1625, and died there of apoplexy while awaiting the delayed arrival of the French bride of the new King, Charles I, the Golden Age swiftly faded. With prophetic truth, Gibbons sang in his famous madrigal—"more geese than swans now live, more fools than wise," for the dark blight of Puritanism soon crushed out all joy.

About a year ago, the English Columbia Company began recording a new series of these sixteenth and seventeenth century masterpieces, with a group known as the St. George's Singers, under the direction of the Rev. Dr. E. H. Fellowes, Minor Canon of St. George's Chapel, Windsor. All of their recordings to date, with the exception of some carols, are collected in this album. Canon Fellowes is the greatest living authority on English music of this period, as attested by his books, articles, and lectures on the subject, and particularly by his scholarly editions of

the music itself. Here we have nine madrigals, a ballet, a carol, a motet, and a piece of Service music, representative of the finest flowering of the Golden Age. The Byrd and Gibbons compositions are in the characteristic serious vein of these composers. The other numbers are either gay or sentimental. Wilbye's perfection of style, Weelkes' daring use of chromatic harmonies, Morley's tuneful cheerfulness, and Vautor's picturesque realism, are admirably illustrated in these splendid examples of their work.



Herbert Boyce Satcher.

MOZART

O-123.596
IMPORTED

Requiem: Fragment du Requiem et Dies Irae (K. 626). One side and

Requiem: Lacrymosa. One side. Both sung by Choeurs de l'Eglise de Saint-Guillaume with grand organ and Municipal Orchestra of Strasbourg under the direction of M. Fritz Munch. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 954.

Mozart died before he completed the Requiem, which he imagined he was writing for himself, and the music, in consequence, reflects much of his pain and agony of spirit. The first side of the present record gives an abridged version of the opening number, immediately preceding the *Dies Irae*, and then proceeds directly into the latter. The second side presents the *Lacrymosa* complete. The chorus sings with fine sincerity and earnestness, and it is ably supported by the Strasbourg Municipal Orchestra. The recording, too, is good.

BACH

B-90090
and
B-90091

St. Matthew's Passion: So ist mein Jesus nun gefangen; Wer hat dich so geschlagen, mein Heil; O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden, voll Schmerz und voller Hohn; Wir setzen uns mit Thränen nieder. Four sides. Rendered by Bruno Kittel Choir (Soloists: Lotte Leonard, soprano, and Emmi Leisner, contralto) and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bruno Kittel. Two 12-inch discs. \$1.50 each.

Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 953.

These selections contain some of the most lovely and affecting passages from the entire Passion. For the sake of convenience, the head has been arranged so that the various numbers follow in logical order. Record 90090 contains the final chorus of the work, and so should be played last. The first side of record 90091, containing the chorus and duet for soprano and alto, *So ist mein Jesus nun gefangen* (No. 33 in the Peters edition of the score), should be played first. It is magnificently sung and recorded here. The soloists are excellent, and the electrifying entrances of the chorus, *Lasst ihn, haltet, bindet nicht!*, are superbly achieved. It is, in some respects, the most successful of the four sides. Side two of record 90091 contains two brief selections, *Wer hat dich so geschlagen, mein Heil*, and the famous *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden, voll Schmerz und voller Hohn*, both chorals. The chorus occupies both sides of the record. The two discs are not entirely free from flaws common to all but the most exceptional of choral recordings; but the general effect is highly realistic, and the chorus and orchestra are beautifully balanced.



VOCAL

BURNS
V-1480

Afton Water. (Robert Burns.) One side and
Annie Laurie. One side. Both sung by Mary Garden (Soprano)
with piano accompaniment by Jean H. Dansereau.
One 10-inch disc. \$1.50.

V-9792

Kol Nidre (Prayer on Day of Atonement). One side and
Eli, Eli. One side. Both sung by Cantor Josef Rosenblatt
(Tenor) with pipe organ. One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.

Both of Mary Garden's old favorites are given eloquent and engagingly restrained interpretations. It takes considerable skill to make these pieces still endurable, but somehow it is managed here, and with signal success . . . Cantor Rosenblatt's renditions of *Eli, Eli* and *Kol Nidre* are properly famous. The recording is excellent and brings out the pipe organ accompaniment effectively.

DEBUSSY
O-123.670
IMPORTED

Le promenoir des deux amants: (1) Auprès de cette grotte sombre;
(2) Crois mon conseil; (3) Je tremble en voyant ton visage.
(arr. Louis Beydts.) and
Mandoline. (arr. Louis Beydts.) Two sides. Both sung by
Roger Bourdin (Baritone) with orchestra conducted by G.
Cloeze. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

Having had the good fortune to review, last month, two *Le promenoir des deux amants* songs, admirably interpreted by Charles Panzera, I find it extremely difficult here to employ any but the most derogatory adjectives in connection with this inartistic Bourdin record. First of all, why should the companies and, in particular, the artists persist in registering upon their valuable wax songs with orchestral accompaniments when the simple and convenient piano would surely make for more authentic and artistic results? One would think that a sense of economy would intervene, causing the recorders to consider the additional expense of hiring an orchestra—particularly when the composer only asks for piano accompaniment . . . Bourdin's voice is not always pleasing. In fact, one might say that in rare instances only does he approximate, by either the natural timbre of his baritone or by his interpretative artistry, a pleasing and typically Debussyan spirit. The second song of the group has not been recorded before. Perhaps many rabid collectors of Debussy discs will, like me, find this ample reason for possession. Let us say nothing at all of the sacrilege committed by M. Beydts on the lovely *Mandoline*.

R. G.

VIOLIN



**SCHUBERT
SCHUMANN**
V-1482

Valse Sentimentale. (Schubert-Franko.) One side and
Träumeri (Reverie). (Schumann.) One side. Both played by
Mischa Elman (Violin) with piano accompaniment.
One 10-inch disc. \$1.50.

**PONCE
GARDNER**
C-2282D

Estrellita (Star of Love). (Ponce.) One side and
From the Canebrake. (Gardner.) One side. Both played by
Albert Sammons (Violin) with piano accompaniment by Gerald
Moore. One 10-inch disc. 75c.

Elman's famed tone is here captured exquisitely. It is too bad, though, that he didn't select something a little more exciting to play. However, both pieces are rendered flawlessly for those who want them. In the Schubert piece, Carroll Hollister provides the piano accompaniment, while in the Schumann Marcel van Gool supplies it . . . Albert Sammons, one of England's finest violinists, devotes his talents to insignificant pieces. *From the Canebrake* is the better. Recording is excellent.

BARTOK
C-2293D

Roumanian Folk Dances: (a) Jocul cu Bâta; (b) Brâul; (c)
Pe Loc; (d) Buciumeana; (e) Poarga; (f) Romaneasca; (g)
Manuntelul. (Bela Bartók-Szekely.) Two sides. Played by
Joseph Szigeti (Violin) and Bela Bartók (Piano).
One 10-inch disc. 75c.

C-LX31
IMPORTED

Hungarian Folk Tunes: (a) Parlando; (b) Andante; (c) Alle-
gro; (d) Andante; (e) Allegro; (f) Andante; (g) Vivace.
(Bela Bartók; arr. Szigeti.) Two sides. Played by Joseph
Szigeti (Violin) and Bela Bartók (Piano).
One 12-inch disc. \$2.

Bela Bartók's indefatigable researches into Hungarian, Roumanian and Slovak folk music now begin, on an exceedingly modest scale, to enrich the library of recorded music. Many of these folk tunes, it is said, have already been privately recorded, but those listed above, and the *Five Roumanian Dances*, reviewed last month under Orchestra, are the first to appear for general distribution. The *Roumanian Folk Dances* here recorded include all those contained in the above mentioned disc, and several more are added for good measure. They are bright, dashing tunes, full of a deep racial pungency. Szigeti tosses them off incomparably, and with immense gusto. His high notes, toward the end of side one, come through with difficulty; otherwise the recording is excellent. The composer provides an appropriate background. The label places the name Szekely beside that of Bartók, but what share Szekely had in preparing these tunes is not made clear. So much hopeless trash is released by eminent violinists, who blissfully continue to play the same trite things considered appropriate for record collectors ten or

The New Victor Records

Tschaikowsky's *Pathétique*, played by Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Puccini's *Tosca*, performed by artists of *La Scala*, and age-old Gregorian chants, sung by the Choir of Monks at the famous Abbey of Saint-Pierre de Solesmes . . . these are the headliners on this month's list of Victor Red Seal Records. And the entire list is worthy of these masterpieces.

Tschaikowsky's Symphony No. 6, in B minor (The *Pathétique*). Played by the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Serge Koussevitzky on five double-faced Victor records in Album M-85 (Nos. 7294-7298), and in automatic sequence, AM-85 (Nos. 7299-7303). List Price, \$10.00.

Puccini's La Tosca (Opera in three acts). Performed by Famous Artists and Orchestra of La Scala, Milan, Italy, on fourteen double-faced Victor records in Album M-84 (Nos. 9758-9771), and in automatic sequence, AM-84 (Nos. 9772-9785). List price, \$21.00.

Gregorian Chants. Sung by the Choir of Monks of the Abbey of Saint-Pierre de Solesmes, France, on twelve double-faced Victor records in Album M-87 (7341-7352). Issued in two volumes. List Price, each volume, \$12.00.

Faust (Gounod) *Mais ce Dieu que peut-Il pour moi?* (If I pray, who is there to hear me?), and

Faust—*Ici je suis à ton service* (Here I am at your service). Sung by Fernand Anseau and Marcel Journet on Victor record 8185. List Price, \$2.50.

Nocturne (from Borodin's Quartet in D Major). Played by the Budapest String Quartet on the two sides of Victor record 9791. List Price, \$1.50.

Träumerei (Schumann) and

Valse Sentimentale (Schubert - Franko). Played by Mischa Elman (Violin) on Victor record 1482. List Price, \$1.50.

Annie Laurie and

Afton Water (Burns). Sung by Mary Garden on Victor record 1480. List Price, \$1.50.

Samson et Dalila (Saint-Saëns). *Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix* (My Heart at thy sweet voice) and

Printemps qui commence (Delilah's Song of Spring). Sung by Sigrid Onegin on Victor record 7320. List Price, \$2.00.

La Cathédrale Engloutie (The Engulfed Cathedral) (Debussy) and

Malagueña (Lecuona). Played by Olga Samaroﬀ (Piano) on Victor record 7304. List Price, \$2.00.

Die Fledermaus — Du und du — Walzer (The Bat—You and You—Waltz) (Johann Strauss, Opus 367). Played by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Frederick Stock on the two sides of Victor record 1481. List Price, \$1.50.

Barbiere di Siviglia — Largo al factotum (Rossini), and

Un Ballo in Maschera—Eri tu (Verdi). Sung by Lawrence Tibbett on Victor record 7353. List Price, \$2.00.



Victor Division
R C A VICTOR COMPANY, Inc.
Camden, New Jersey

fifteen years ago, that a disc such as this comes as an almost incredible surprise. The Columbia Company is to be commended for making available the combined efforts of a distinguished modern composer and violinist at so low a price . . . The *Hungarian Folk Tunes* come off equally well. Szegeti has arranged them for violin, and in so doing has lost none of the genuine folk flavor and piquancy of the originals. An uncommonly interesting violin disc.



VOLONCELLO



**LALO
SAINT-SAËNS**
C-50251D

Concerto in D: Intermezzo. (Lalo.) One side and
Romance. (Saint-Saëns.) One side. Both played by Horace
Britt (Violoncello) with piano accompaniment by Josef Adler.
One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.

**MOZART
WAGNER**
C-50248D

Ave Verum. (Mozart; arr. Squire.) One side and
Die Meistersinger: Prize Song. (Wagner; arr. Squire.) One
side. Both played by W. H. Squire (Violoncello) with organ
accompaniment. One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.

The Lalo and Saint-Saëns pieces are well recorded and smoothly played. The piano accompaniment is excellent . . . Mr. Squire's greasy arrangements of the Mozart and Wagner selections are not calculated to arouse much enthusiasm. Mozart and Wagner don't wear the clothes of the *Rosary*, *Narcissus* and such sticky things very gracefully. Besides, there is such a wealth of fourth-rate sentimental music available that it seems rather unnecessary to arrange reputable music so that it will appeal to customers of theme songs. Such arrangements never appeal to genuine music lovers, and the vast audience for whom they really are intended are much too busy with the standard tear-squeezers to occupy themselves with less familiar matter.



TUNES OF THE MOMENT

Body and Soul by Leo Reisman and His Orchestra (Victor 22537). 75c.

Sing Something Simple by Fred Rich and His Orchestra (Columbia 2299D). 75c.

I'll Be Blue, Just Thinking of You by Isham Jones' Orchestra (Brunswick 4914). 75c.





RELEASES FOR THE MONTH OF

NOVEMBER

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| 90086-87 | SMETANA—THE MOLDAU . . . Symphonic Poem—Parts 1 to 3
THE STATE OPERA ORCHESTRA, BERLIN
ERICH KLEIBER, Conductor | } | Recorded in Europe
PRICE \$3.00 |
| | DVOŘÁK—SLAVONIC DANCE Opus 46—No. 1
THE STATE OPERA ORCHESTRA, BERLIN
ERICH KLEIBER, Conductor | | |
| 90088 | RICHARD STRAUSS—SALOMÉ . . . Dance of the Seven Veils
THE STATE OPERA ORCHESTRA, BERLIN
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New Victor Foreign Repressings

Each year Victor adds to its catalogue a number of repressings from its foreign affiliations. This year, as a glance down the following list will readily show, these repressings are more numerous and attractive than ever. Many of these records have already been reviewed in *Disques*; many more, having been available through the importers for some months, have been widely reviewed and discussed. Comment here, therefore, will necessarily have to be brief, confining itself largely to the quality of the recording and interpretation. These records, which will be available October 31, are reviewed under Orchestra, Piano, Opera, etc., as in the body of *Disques*.

ORCHESTRA

Bax: Tintagel. Three sides and *Mediterranean*. One side. Played by New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. Two 12-inch discs (V-9787 and V-9788). \$1.50 each.

Busch: Ozarka Suite—(1) At Sunset; (2) The Hill-Billies' Dance. One side and *Song of the Volga Boatmen* (Choral-Symphonic Paraphrase arr. by Albert Stoessel). One side. Both played by National High School Orchestra conducted by Joseph E. Maddy. One 12-inch disc (V-35974). \$1.25.

Delius: In a Summer Garden. Played by London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Geoffrey Toye. Three sides and *A Song Before Sunrise*. One side. Played by New Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Barbirolli. Two 12-inch discs (V-9731 and V-9732). \$1.50 each.

Falla: Nights in the Gardens of Spain. Played by Symphony Orchestra conducted by Piero Coppola (Piano solo: Mme. Van Barentzen). Five sides and *Andalusia*. One side. Played by Mme. Van Barentzen (Piano). Three 12-inch discs (V-9703 to V-9705). \$1.50 each.

Haydn: Symphony No. 13 in G Major. Six sides. Played by Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. Three 10-inch discs (V-4189 to V-4191). \$1 each.

Liadow: Russian Folk Songs. Three sides and *The Musical Snuff Box*. One side. Both played by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates. Two 12-inch discs (V-9797 and V-9798). \$1.50 each.

Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 1. Four sides. Played by the Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Leo Blech. Two 10-inch discs (4187 and 4188). \$1 each.

Mendelssohn: Ruy Blas Overture, Op. 95. Two sides. Played by Symphony Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent. One 12-inch disc (V-9733). \$1.50. *Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 611.*

Mozart: Serenade—Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (K. 525) and Hornpipe. (Purcell.) Four sides. Played by John Barbirolli's Chamber Orchestra. Two 12-inch discs (V-9789 and V-9790). \$1.50 each. *Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 218.*

Ravel: Alborada del Gracioso. Two sides. Played by Symphony Orchestra conducted by Piero Coppola. One 12-inch disc (V-9702). \$1.50.

Schmitt: The Tragedy of Salome. Six sides. Played by Symphony Orchestra conducted by Piero Coppola. Three 12-inch discs (V-9735 to V-9737). \$1.50 each. *Miniature Score: Durand et Cie, Paris.*

Wagner: A Faust Overture. Two sides. Played by London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates. One 12-inch disc (V-9734). \$1.50.

Wolf-Ferrari: The Secret of Susanna Overture. One side and *Don Juan: The Song of the Nightingale.* (Nápravnik, Op. 54.) One side. Both played by Members of La Scala Orchestra conducted by Ettore Panizza. One 12-inch disc (V-9730). \$1.50.

Tintagel and *Mediterranean* were reviewed in the article "Arnold Bax, A Modern Mystic," published in the July issue. . . . The National High School Orchestra reveals an astonishing competence in its selections, of which *The Hill-Billies' Dance* is the most enjoyable. The recording is powerful . . . Delius' *In a Summer Garden*, sensitively played and recorded here, was reviewed in the article "Frederick Delius, 'An Intellectual Solitary,'" included in the August issue. *A Song Before Sunrise* completes this little set of two records, which apparently represents Victor's first venture with Delius' music. . . . "The three Nocturnes for orchestra and pianoforte, *Noches (nights) en los jardines de España*, were the first works in which Falla gave the true measure of his power as a composer," says J. B. Trend in his *Manuel de Falla and Spanish Music*. Finished in 1916, they were played in London in 1921. Falla himself played the pianoforte part and aroused such enthusiasm that the audience

(Continued on page 381)

A Musical Thanksgiving Feast

Every season American gramophiles look forward eagerly to the special list of European recordings released by Victor. This year they indeed have reason to "give thanks," for the list of importations discloses a rich harvest of music . . . vocal and instrumental, classic and modern. Here is music of unusual interest . . . and music to gratify the most comprehensive of tastes.

Important among the modern French numbers recorded, is Florent Schmitt's "The Tragedy of Salome," considered by critics to be one of the greatest of ballets written during the present century. The veiled impressionistic, brooding mystery of the "Prelude," the exotic rhythms of the "Dance of Pearls," the uncanny suspense of the "Dance of the Lightnings," and the final tumultuous and overpowering "Dance of Fear" . . . these constitute some of the most magnificent pages in modern music. Maurice Ravel, a Frenchman better known to American audiences because of the recent success of his *Bolero*, is represented with two splendid compositions: "The Morning Serenade of a Merry Wit" (*Alborada del Gracioso*), like the *Bolero* is Spanish in style, dazzlingly orchestrated, and as its title suggests, filled with a gay and somewhat ironic humor. The other Ravel number, the "Introduction and Allegro" for Harp, String Quartet, Flute, and Clarinet, is notable for its wealth of melody, harmonic richness, and for the glowing tonal colors the composer obtains from so few instruments. Of the composers of modern Spain, one of the best known is Manuel de Falla. His "Nights in the Gardens of Spain" has appeared frequently on the programs of American symphony orchestras, and thus a recorded version will fill a long felt want. The younger Englishmen are also assuming a place of importance in the musical world; therefore works by two representative composers are prominent among these recordings from abroad: "Tintagel" and "Mediterranean" by Arnold Bax, and "In a Summer Garden" and "A Song Before Sunrise" by Frederick Delius are noteworthy for their poetic beauty, their delicate-hued harmonies, and charming touches of the folk-song style.

In contrast to these works representative of various modern tendencies, will be found undying classics, and pieces of enduring popularity. The eighteenth century grace and refinement of Mozart's "Serenade"—*Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, and of Haydn's "Symphony in G Major" (No. 13), are of such abiding charm and absolute perfection as to win the admiration of music lovers of every age and country. And in spite of the changes of fashion, Liszt's brilliant "Hungarian Rhapsodies" still move audiences to thundering applause, so there will doubtless be a welcome for the recording of the "First" in an orchestral version, and the merry "Sixth" in the original piano solo form. A composer of the same epoch and of greater fame is Richard Wagner. It is fitting that he should be represented in this list by works that are almost novelties in the field of recorded music: his very dramatic orchestral piece, "A Faust Overture," and the marvelous Love Duet from Act II of "Tristan and Isolde"—universally acknowledged one of the most profoundly thrilling scenes in the whole realm of opera.

Limitations of space have compelled us to give you in the paragraphs above only an inkling of the great music represented in the fifty or more numbers on this list. Neither could we mention by name all the splendid orchestras, conductors, and soloists who have made the records, nor dwell on the excellence of the recording itself. Visit your Victor dealer. He will gladly play for you any or all the numbers on this new list of European Recordings. You will indeed find it a "Horn of Plenty" to make yours a musical Thanksgiving.



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New Victor Foreign Repressings (Continued)

actually cheered. "If," Falla has said, "if these 'symphonic impressions' have achieved their object, the mere enumeration of their titles should be a sufficient guide to the hearer. Although in this work—as in all which have a legitimate claim to be considered as music—the composer has followed a definite design, regarding tonal, rhythmical, and thematic material . . . the end for which it was written is no other than to evoke [the memory of] places, sensations, and sentiments. The themes employed are based (as in much of the composer's earlier work) on the rhythms, modes, cadences, and ornamental figures which distinguish the popular music of Andalusia, though they are rarely used in their original forms; and the orchestration frequently employs, and employs in a conventional manner, certain effects peculiar to the popular instruments used in those parts of Spain. The music has no pretensions to being descriptive; it is merely expressive. But something more than the sounds of festivals and dances has inspired these 'evocations in sound,' for melancholy and mystery have their part also." The recording is fair; the piano part is not reproduced as clearly and naturally as it might be. *Andalusia* is the last of the four pieces for piano included in *Pièces espagnoles pour le piano*. It is a vivid and expressive piece, well played here.

The Haydn Symphony was reviewed in July, on page 196. Coates' remarkable recording of Liadow's arrangement of *Eight Russian Folk Songs* was reviewed on page 262 of the September issue . . . The *Hungarian Rhapsody* is a brilliant recording, played with Blech's customary vigor . . . The *Ruy Blas Overture* is a big, full-volumed recording, with plenty of body. The brass is not so smooth as it might be, and more thorough rehearsal conceivably could have helped the orchestra . . . John Barbirolli's Chamber Orchestra gives a first-rate performance of the lovely *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, and the recording is flawless. The two discs constitute a substantial addition to the Victor catalogue . . . *Alborada del Gracioso* first appeared as a piano piece in the collection *Les Miroirs*, which dates from 1906. The piece was later orchestrated, and it is in that form that it is presented here. It is a smooth, briskly executed recording, and is one of Piero Coppola's most enjoyable discs.

Schmitt's *Tragedy of Salome* was reviewed on page 167 of the July issue . . . Oscar Fried's version of *A Faust Overture* was discussed on page 307 of the October issue. This by Coates is an excellent one, too, and has the further advantage of being on one record. . . . The merry little Overture to Wolf-

Ferrari's *The Secret of Susanna* is a delightful piece of recording and playing . . . The reverse side is less interesting. It contains Nápravnik's *Song of the Nightingale* from *Don Juan*. Eduard Frantsovitch Nápravnik was born at Bejst, Bohemia, in 1839 and died at Petrograd in 1915. Although he was of Czech origin, the character of his music is unmistakably Russian. The *Song of the Nightingale* given here is from the incidental music he wrote to A. Tolstoi's *Don Juan*.

CHAMBER MUSIC

Ravel: Introduction and Allegro for Harp with Strings and Woodwind Accompaniment. Played by Virtuoso String Quartet with J. Cockerill, R. Murchy and C. Draper. Three sides and *Novelette—No. 3*. (Bridge.) One side. Played by Virtuoso String Quartet. Two 12-inch discs (V-9738 and V-9739). \$1.50 each.

These records belong at the very top of the recorded works of Ravel. They were reviewed on page 19 of the March issue.

PIANO

Beethoven: Ecossaise. One side and *Prelude Pathétique*. (Cherkassky.) One side. Both played by Shura Cherkassky (Piano). One 10-inch disc (V-4192). \$1.

Chopin: Waltz in D Flat, Op. 64, No. 1 and *Etude in C Major*, Op. 10, No. 7. One side and *Waldesrauschen*. (Liszt.) One side. Both played by Wilhelm Backhaus (Piano). One 12-inch disc (V-7270). \$2.

Chopin: Scherzo, Op. 31. Two sides. Played by Benno Moisevitch (Piano). One 12-inch disc (V-6920). \$2.

Grieg: Wedding Day, Op. 65, No. 6. Two sides. Played by Arthur de Greef (Piano). One 10-inch disc (V-1473). \$1.50.

Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6. Two sides. Played by Mischa Levitzki (Piano). One 12-inch disc (V-7276). \$2.

Mendelssohn: Prelude, Op. 35, No. 1. One side and *Scherzo*, Op. 16, No. 2. One side. Both played by Shura Cherkassky (Piano). One 10-inch disc (V-4193). \$1.

Mozart: Don Giovanni—Serenade (arr. Backhaus). One side and *Dedication* (Love Song). (Schumann-Liszt.) One side. Both played by Wilhelm Backhaus (Piano). One 10-inch disc (V-1472). \$1.50.

Shura Cherkassky is at present a student at the Curtis Institute of Music, where he is

(Continued on page 383)

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Columbia Record No. 67813-D

César Franck: Psyché: No. 4—Psyché et Eros. In 2 parts, \$2.00. By Désiré Defauw and Orchestra of the Brussels Royal Conservatory.

Columbia Record No. 67812-D

Prokofieff: Love of the Three Oranges: March. Glazounow: Interludium in Modo Antico. Two parts, \$2.00. By Désiré Defauw and Orchestra of the Brussels Royal Conservatory.



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New Victor Foreign Repressings (Continued)

a pupil of Josef Hofmann. His first records appear here. He plays with a fine, singing tone, which lacks, most of all, firmness and poise. His own composition, composed at the age of eleven, is, naturally, a little self-conscious and pompous, but it is interesting for all that. The recording is good . . . Backhaus' rendition of the Chopin pieces is crisp and delicate. The Liszt *Waldesrauschen* does not fare so well, owing to uncertain recording, which doesn't seem quite equal to the volume . . . Moiseivitch's reading of the Chopin *Scherzo* is competently recorded. . . . Arthur De Greef specializes in the works of Grieg, whom he knew intimately, and so his interpretation here may be considered authoritative. Save in one or two spots where the volume is too loud to reproduce the piano clearly, the recording is fine and sparkling. . . . The Liszt *Hungarian Rhapsody* is in many ways the most enjoyable of the discs in this batch. The recording is clear, full and warm, and the interpretation is a superb combination of vigor and delicacy . . . The Mendelssohn numbers reveal the same faults and virtues that were apparent in the other Cherkassky disc, reviewed above . . . The Serenade from *Don Giovanni* is effective as a piano disc, and it is played with grace and precision. The Schumann-Liszt number on the reverse side is equally pleasing.

OPERA

Février: *Monna Vanna*—Air de Prinzivalle and Elle est à moi. Two sides. Both sung by Fernand Anseau (Tenor) with orchestra conducted by Piero Coppola. One 10-inch disc (V-1471). \$1.50.

Puccini: *Manon Lescaut*—Act 2: In quelle Trine morbide and L'ora, O Tirsi (Minuetto di Manon). Two sides. Sung by Frances Alda (Soprano) with orchestra. One 10-inch disc (V-1474). \$1.50.

Wagner: *Tristan und Isolde*—Act 2: Love Duet. Four sides. Rendered by Frida Leider (Soprano), Lauritz Melchior (Tenor) and London Symphony and Berlin State Opera Orchestras conducted by Albert Coates. Two 12-inch discs (V-7273 and V-7274). \$2 each. *Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 905.*

Wagner: *The Flying Dutchman*—Act 1: Die frist ist um! Two sides. Sung by Friedrich Schorr (Baritone) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Leo Blech. One 12-inch disc (V-7269). \$2. *Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 902.*

Wagner: *Tannhäuser*—Act 3: Rome Narration. Two sides. Sung by Lauritz Melchior (Tenor) with London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates. One 12-inch disc (V-9707). \$1.50. *Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 903.*

Henri Février, born in Paris in 1876, should not be confused with Henri Louis Février, of Abbeville, who published two books of harpsichord pieces in the eighteenth century. The present composer has written several comic operas, and two operas, one of which, *Monna Vanna*, dates from 1909. The two selections given here are tuneful, and Anseau makes the most of them. The orchestral accompaniment, conducted by Coppola, is excellent . . . Alda's voice is delightfully fresh and pure in the *Manon* selections, which she sings with sympathy, understanding and taste. The orchestral accompaniment is somewhat above the general average. . . . The *Tristan* Love Duet was reviewed on page 98 of the May issue . . . The Schorr *Flying Dutchman* number was noticed in August, on page 224 . . . The *Tannhäuser* selection is a welcome addition to the recordings from this opera. Melchior is one of the most successful Wagnerian tenors recording today, and Coates' proficiency with Wagner is well known. The combination is a happy one, and the disc is highly recommended.

ORGAN

Bach: *Prelude in G Major* and *Fugue in G Major*. Two sides. Played by Marcel Dupré (Organ). One 12-inch disc (V-7271). \$2.

Bach: *Prelude and Fugue in E Minor*. Two sides. Played by Albert Schweitzer (Organ). One 12-inch disc (V-9741). \$1.50.

Both of these discs were recorded on the organ of Queen's Hall, London, England, but Dupré seems to have all the advantages so far as the actual recording is concerned. His disc is, in fact, about as satisfactory as we can reasonably expect at this stage of organ reproduction. The tone is full and impressive and never coarse. Dr. Schweitzer's selection is recognizable, and at times sounds authentic, but on the whole the reproduction is far from good. His playing, though, is thoroughly first-rate.

VOCAL

Bach: *St. Matthew's Passion*—Aus liebe will mein Heiland Sterben. One side and *Cantata No. 159*—Es ist vollbracht. (Bach; adapted by Alwin). One side. Both sung
(Continued on page 385)

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by Elisabeth Schumann (Soprano) with orchestra conducted by Karl Alwin. One 12-inch disc (V-7275). \$2.

Rossini: Stabat Mater—Pro Peccatis. One side and **La Procession** (César Franck). One side. Both sung by Marcel Journet (Bass) with orchestra. One 12-inch disc (V-7289). \$2.

Strauss: Wiegenlied (Cradle Song). One side and **Standchen, No. 2** (Serenade), Op. 17. One side. Both sung by Elisabeth Schumann. One 12-inch disc (V-7210). \$2.

Schumann's records are seldom disappointing. The Bach numbers are rendered with taste and dignity. In the *St. Matthew Passion* number, John Amadio provides the flute obbligato. An oboe obbligato is played by Leon Goossens on the reverse side. The Strauss numbers, too, are sung delightfully. . . . Marcel Journet's pieces are well adapted for his robust voice. The orchestral accompaniment is beyond cavil.

VIOLIN

Falla: La Vida Breve—Spanish Dance No. 1. One side and **Le Deluge: Prelude**. (Saint-Saëns.) One side. Both played by Jacques Thibaud (Violin) with piano accompaniment by George de Lausnay. One 12-inch disc (V-7272). \$2.

The Spanish Dance No. 1 from *La Vida Breve*, having been disposed of by the orchestras, now is eagerly seized by the fiddlers. Thibaud's version is graceful and smooth but somewhat lacking in fire. His tone in the Saint-Saëns piece is exquisite.

FLUTE

Chaminade: Concertino, Op. 107. One side and **Konzertstück: Finale** (Heinrich Hofmann, Op. 98). One side. Both played by John Amadio (Flute) with orchestra. One 12-inch disc (V-9706). \$1.50.

This is a delightful record, not only for those seriously interested in the instrument, but also for the general music lover. The recording is excellent, and the accompanying orchestra provides a suitable background.

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J. Jobert La Sirene Musicale

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Jean Sibelius

(Continued from page 344)

The result is complete and overwhelming satisfaction, whereas in many a classic symphony you are bored and weary at the end of the movement, being satiated with about the fifth presentation of the complete beginning idea. Needless to say, Sibelius makes no fetish of this gestative form, and frequently resorts to the well worn structural themes, but never without an unexpected turn here and a pleasant surprise there. His orchestration is never pretty, but rather tends to the ruggedness of unpolished granite; it belongs to the open air rather than the concert hall. It is as far removed from artificiality as possible, and, if possible, further removed from the theater. It is a significant fact that he has written no opera, although he has composed in almost every other form. A Sibelius score looks quite different from any other score, presenting an unusual face to the first casual glance. His orchestra is almost that of Beethoven, fancy instruments being conspicuous by their absence.

It comes as a surprise to many when they learn that Sibelius has written no less than seven or even perhaps eight symphonies, because they judge him by three or four popular lyric pieces, among them being the *Valse Triste* and the *Romance in D flat* for piano. *Finlandia* appears to them to be his biggest work. None of the above pieces really represent the true Sibelian style. There is much else, however, readily accessible to ordinary home talent, that does give some idea of the real Sibelian ethos. The three Sonatinas for piano, Op. 67, are recommended for home consumption. There is a capital piano duet arrangement of the *Third Symphony*. The piano sonata, Op. 12, gives some idea of his idiom, though it is a very early work. Nobody with any feeling can but enjoy certain of the songs, notably *The Tryst*, *Black Roses*, *The Silent Town* and many more.

(Mr. Powell's article will be concluded in the December issue, when he will discuss the recordings of Sibelius' Symphonies Nos. 1 and 2 and his Romans, Op. 78, No. 2.)



CORRESPONDENCE



Louis Armstrong

Editor, *Disques*:

I have followed with much interest the reviews in your periodical. Especially interesting to me have been the articles on Schönberg, Delius, Honegger, Poulenc, Ravel, and, of course, Stravinsky. Persons interested in the development (or at present, in the decline) of modern music must look far to find a magazine that handles these subjects as enthusiastically and as intelligently as *Disques* does.

In the October number was printed an editorial dealing with jazz and its value in the development of modern musical taste, and I heartily agreed with all of the statements made. But I should like to call to your attention some jazz records which possibly have escaped your attention. They are the Okeh records made by Louis Armstrong and his orchestra. I believe they are infinitely more valuable than anything yet done in jazz. The finest of these records are *Black and Blue* (8714), *St. James Infirmary* (8657), *Basin Street Blues* (41241), and *West End Blues* (8597). Strictly speaking, these records are not compositions, although credit is generally given on the label to someone as composer, and I have traced the melodies back, in most instances, to American or negro folk-song sources. But the real value of these pieces is in the playing. The orchestration gets away completely from the disgusting, commonplace see-saw, toot-toot methods of the Gershwin-Whiteman crowd. The pianist in the Armstrong orchestra, Earl Hines, was considered by Maurice Ravel to be the finest he heard in this country on his tour in 1928. It is Louis Armstrong himself, however, who is outstanding. He *feels* more music and is able to express more than all of your cheap dance-hall organizations put together. And yet his records, I daresay, have never sold outside of the black and tan districts of New York and Chicago, and a small circle of music enthusiasts here in Chicago.

It would be distinctly to *Disques'* advantage to investigate these records and devote some space in reviewing them, for they are, I believe, one of the best contributions this country has made so far to the cause of good music.

CHARLES H. MITCHELL.

Oak Park, Illinois.

A Rebuke

Editor, *Disques*:

I should not have thought of offering any adverse criticism of *Disques* if you had not invited it. I was too grateful for its coming into existence, too impressed with its merits, to think of its faults. Yet its greatest fault, perhaps, lies right on the surface, both literally and figuratively—so obvious as to escape notice, a thing that often happens. This fault is its name and the manner of spelling it, together with implications that go deeper and may color its whole character.

I had *Disques* placed among the periodicals available at my city's public library. The librarian, a lover of good printing, was at once impressed with the effect of its cover. But to the head of the music department I said I wished something could be done toward making casual readers know what the magazine was about. Nobody not already in the secret would ever suspect that it had anything to do with fine phonograph records. The word "disk" is rarely used as a means of designating such records. To disguise the meaning further by the unusual spelling "disques" and then to alienate it one more step from ordinary comprehension by using a lower case letter instead of a capital gives it an air of aloofness regrettable in any periodical seeking to widen the appreciation of what fine records are doing.

This name, despite its merits in exciting curiosity, borders dangerously near to the effect created by using such a sign as "Booke Shoppe," which tends to drive away any genuine book lover as well as to exclude the ordinary roughnecks whom it seeks to warn away.

Disques is a great deal better than its name. It seems to be healthfully aware that true art is not a matter of wearing long hair or flowing neckties.

Besides all this, making records on disks is only a temporary expedient. When some better way is devised, such, possibly, as the use of films, so that music can be heard without sounds of scratching and without breaks, disks will be outdated and your magazine will be in the position of the one that called itself the Nineteenth Century when the twentieth century arrived.

ADOLPH SCHMUCK.

Indianapolis, Ind.

BOOKS

My Musical Life. By Walter Damrosch. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.

Describing an opera singer of his acquaintance, Dr. Damrosch says: "As a man he was of a singularly delightful, almost childlike disposition. The things of this life rarely existed for him as they really were. He saw them through the glass of his own exuberant imagination." Almost the same might be said of Dr. Damrosch—at least, as he reveals himself in the pages of this rather garrulous autobiography. He has had a long, varied and colorful career, but nothing save its externals seems to have made much of an impression upon him. But his book is seldom dull, and his reminiscences of music in the United States during the latter part of the past century and the early part of the present are often valuable and instructive. There have evidently been some vast changes, and Dr. Damrosch relates them with gusto. A generous portion of the credit for the popularity of symphonic music in America today, he seems to think, belongs to him—and he is probably right. The book was first published in 1923; now it is reissued at a more popular price. There is an additional chapter, describing the conductor's radio experiences. On page 49 Dr. Damrosch speaks of an interesting picture of Liszt, which, he says, "is reproduced in this book." But it is nowhere to be found.

Music. By William Lyon Phelps. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. \$1.

Professor Phelps, who spends most of his time with literature and the drama, now turns, with not noticeably brilliant results, to music. He hasn't much to say (there are only 57 pages, of rather large type, in his book), and that little seldom gets beyond the somewhat painfully obvious. "Do symphony concerts bore you?" asks the publishers' blurb, with embarrassing directness. "Then this is your book," it replies with alacrity, assuming that they do. Professor Phelps' remedy is a simple, but not very new, one. To enjoy good music, he says, one merely has to listen carefully. Music will do the rest. When Professor Phelps was a student at Yale, he went to a symphony concert. It bored him unspeakably. He went again, and it was al-

most as bad. Employing the fortitude that has sustained him in his many years instructing the students at Yale, he persevered, listening, he tells us, with all his might. The results were astonishing and gratifying. He found that symphony concerts were actually enjoyable. Now he is an enthusiastic music lover whose pleasure from the art is envied by even Horatio Parker.

A good bit of the book is devoted to an irrelevant and inconsequential discussion of the effects music had upon Browning and Schopenhauer. There is an afterword on *Music and Melancholy*, which is equally barren. "Great music," declares the Professor, "is not only inspiring and refreshing; it is positively restorative." This is rather sweeping. There is plenty of evidence pointing to the contrary being true. Havelock Ellis, somewhere or other, describes the effects of the Wagnerian music dramas upon a sentient listener; and it would require a bouncing optimism to call these effects restorative. There is also the case of poor Madoc in Cabell's *The Music from Behind the Moon*—but perhaps Ettarre's music, to Professor Phelps, was not "great."

Educational Catalog and Graded List of Victor Records for Home, School and College. Educational Department, RCA Victor. Camden, New Jersey: RCA Victor Co., Inc.

The Victor Educational Catalog, a model of convenient and accurate listing, somehow never gets the attention it properly deserves. In educational institutions, of course, it is widely used. But the average record collector, either through ignorance of its existence or because of its forbidding title, generally passes it by. Its vast amount of information—not only about records, but also about composers and musical compositions—makes it an invaluable reference. It also lists many records which might otherwise escape attention. This latest edition contains a preface by Mrs. Frances Elliott Clark. The catalogue is divided into four main sections: *Graded List*, *Special Lists for Music Appreciation*, *Correlation of Music with Other Subjects* and *Tabulation*. The book is available from any Victor dealer, gratis.

